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President: Mr. Han Seung-soo ..... (Republic of Korea)

The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Agenda item 166 (*continued*)

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Report of the Secretary-General (A/56/160 and Corr.1 and Add.1)

Mr. Pradhan (Bhutan): The General Assembly meets this year under exceptionally grave circumstances in New York to consider the agenda item on terrorism. Hence, allow me at the outset to join other speakers in thanking The Honourable Rudolph Giuliani, Mayor of New York, for having taken time from his exceedingly difficult and busy responsibilities and call of duty to make a historic visit to the United Nations and address the General Assembly. My delegation, like many others, was moved by his appeal to the international community to fight unambiguously against terrorism. The impact that he made was immense. We thank the Mayor for his outstanding leadership of our host city and the effective and humane manner in which he is conducting the rescue and recovery operations at ground zero. This is indeed the darkest hour in the history of our host city, and the Mayor's leadership has been nothing short of crucial.

At the start of our deliberations on terrorism, my delegation would like to once again convey the deepest condolences of the Government and the people of Bhutan to the Government and the people of the United States for the tragedy of 11 September. The terrorist attacks on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon and the crash of the hijacked aeroplane in Pennsylvania have left all of us shocked and horrified.

It is gratifying that in these most trying of times, we, the Member States of the United Nations, are coming together and mobilizing our efforts in the fight against terrorism. While the international legal framework is being established and built upon, cooperation in intelligence, intensification of intelligence gathering, sharing and analysing information and timely pre-emptive action will go a long way in preventing terrorist acts. This is something we have to now undertake vigorously and with the greatest of unity.

Then there is the long-term war against terrorism. But the question is, how do we go about it? This is obviously a very difficult task and may even sometimes seem elusive. This war against terrorism, as the United States President, Mr. George W. Bush put it, has to be fought on several fronts.

One of the major fronts would be the fight against extremist beliefs and organizations that justify their violence and killings on the basis of political and, unfortunately, distorted religious grounds. Such justifications, again, regrettably attract support and sympathy among groups in some countries that may even subscribe to, aid and abet, maintain silence about or turn a blind eye to such activities in view of political or other pressures.

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When it comes to terrorism, we are most concerned with beliefs and mindsets involved in terrorist acts leading to the destruction of innocent lives and the peaceful functioning of the economic, social, cultural and political aspects of societies.

We are apprehensive that peaceful coexistence, a fundamental principle of the United Nations Charter and the Non-Aligned Movement, will be cast to the winds. We are concerned with the survival and the continuance of all of the world's civilizations that we cherish. We are worried that the economic development into which we are putting our hearts and minds in an effort to remove poverty, fight the worldwide scourge of HIV/AIDS and raise the living standards of our people will be seriously jeopardized. Above all, we subscribe to peaceful coexistence and tolerance. We demand no less from other nations and peoples.

The investigations carried out thus far by the United States and other countries and organizations reveal how deep the tentacles of terror have spread around the world. Its strength and reach, and more surprising, the human beings who are willing to indulge in such activities and sacrifice their own lives, seem to be growing by the day. This, without a doubt, is due to the inculcation of extremist beliefs through brainwashing. We were alarmed to learn of the so-called training camps in Afghanistan and other countries. How inhuman can one get?

Before the terrorist attacks on the United States, the Taliban bombarded to pieces the ancient Buddhist statues in Afghanistan, which were in fact a valuable cultural and historical legacy of the Afghan people themselves, and also of the world at large. The appeals by civilized people the world over, including many brotherly Muslim countries, called on the Taliban to respect the sentiments of Buddhists and the international community alike. But, as we all know, those appeals fell on deaf ears.

How can peaceful coexistence be possible in these circumstances? How can peaceful coexistence be possible when the distorted mindsets of some give them a sense of superiority over other people on the planet and cause them to work for their destruction? These are vital questions to which we need answers.

Although we have individually condemned the terrorist attacks and collectively adopted resolutions in both the Security Council and the General Assembly, this gives little or no solace to the thousands of victims, to those who have lost their near and dear ones, to those whose lives have been forever changed as a result of these heinous attacks.

What the international community must now demonstrate is the requisite political will and a renewed commitment to fight this menace. Today terrorists used jet aircraft as human-guided missiles; tomorrow, they will use chemical, biological or even nuclear weapons. These are weapons of mass destruction that will wipe out entire cities and populations. We must therefore undertake sustained and vigorous efforts for a comprehensive strategy to combat and eliminate such terrorism. Pre-emptive action based on sound information will be of the essence.

Bhutan has faced its own share of terrorism. Despite our limited resources, we have taken a firm stand against such activities. We have an adequate legal framework to deal with those who commit such crimes. We are increasing our capabilities to fight against this menace. Above all, the entire Bhutanese people, irrespective of ethnic or religious origin or background, have joined hands to fight against this scourge.

In our region of South Asia, terrorism has been rife for many years. Even we in the remote Himalayan mountains have not been spared. In an effort to counter it jointly, the seven countries of South Asia adopted the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism in 1987. Bhutan is a State party to that Convention.

In conclusion, allow me to end my presentation with a quotation from the sixteenth-century English poet John Donne, who put it so eloquently when he said:

> "No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main ... any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee."

Mr. Zackheos (Cyprus): I should like at the outset to reiterate my delegation's profound sorrow and sense of solidarity with the Government and the people of the United States in the face of this calamity which has befallen them, and to condemn unequivocally these criminal and barbaric acts, which we consider an attack on all of humanity. Our sympathy also goes to the

families of the victims and to all the countries whose nationals perished or are missing as a result of this heinous assault against the fundamental principles of civilization.

The date of 11 September will go down in history not only as a day of infamy but also as the day on which the international community was energized to tackle this scourge once and for all and eliminate it from the face of the Planet. To do so will require a long and sustained effort at all levels: national, regional and international. This multifaceted phenomenon can be attacked and contained only through effective action on many fronts. It is a phenomenon that transcends national borders, religions, cultures and civilizations. That is why it is imperative that it be addressed through a global and multilateral approach. The primary responsibility in the fight against terrorism undeniably lies with the United Nations, which, through the Security Council and the General Assembly, immediately responded to the shocking events of 11 September with determination, adopting the relevant resolutions of almost two weeks ago, and in particular Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), adopted last Friday.

The fight against terrorism must unite all humanity and cannot be allowed to fall victim to politicization or ephemeral considerations. Cyprus categorically rejects any such attempt and any tendency to equate terrorism with the Arab or Muslim world. In this respect, we commend the outstanding efforts of President George W. Bush to safeguard the culture of tolerance and multiculturalism which is the cornerstone of American society and the source of its strength.

The Government of Cyprus has aligned itself with the conclusions and plan of action of the extraordinary European Council meeting of 21 September, and my delegation also aligns itself with the statement made earlier in the debate by the Permanent Representative of Belgium on behalf of the European Union.

Cyprus fully shares the view of the European Union and others on the need for a global mobilization against terrorism under the auspices of the United Nations. We also agree with the European Union on the need for the international community to work in tandem to prevent and resolve regional conflicts such as the situation in the Middle East and in Cyprus. Resolving the Cyprus problem will restore stability in the eastern Mediterranean, usher in a new era of Greco-Turkish relations and thereby strengthen anti-terrorist efforts. We also support the integration of all countries into an equitable world system of security, prosperity and development as the precondition for a strong community for combating terrorism.

We reaffirm our commitment to join forces with all Governments in the struggle to eliminate the scourge of international terrorism. That determination has been explicitly stated at the highest level, with the assurance that all practical measures will be taken in cooperation with the international community and the obligations deriving from the relevant international treaties to which we have acceded. Cyprus has ratified or acceded to nine of the 12 international conventions pertaining to international terrorism, including the three basic conventions related to terrorism: the Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings; the Convention against the Taking of Hostages; and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons, including Diplomatic Agents. It is, furthermore, one of the 44 signatories to the most recent Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, whose ratification will follow in the very near future.

Cyprus also supports the efforts for a comprehensive convention against terrorism, which would enhance the ability of the international community to respond more effectively to this ugly phenomenon. We hope that the negotiations currently under way within the context of the United Nations will be concluded soon, so that the General Assembly can take the necessary steps for its realization.

The terrorist attacks on 11 September were a wake-up call to us all. They brought into sharper focus, in the most brutal and horrific manner, our vulnerability and the indiscriminate nature of terrorism. This event dictated upon all of us the need to review security and other measures in existence. I wish to inform the Assembly that the Council of Ministers of Cyprus approved on 20 September a comprehensive proposal for the establishment of a task force to combat international terrorism, including illegal arms sales and brokerage. This unit will, inter alia, have the authority to investigate, upon information or suspicion, the activities, books and dealings of companies registered in Cyprus and the assets and accounts of any individual who might be involved in the sponsorship of terrorism, including, for example, illegal arms sales, financial involvement and transhipment. The unit will also have

the authority to take any action that might be deemed necessary, such as freezing assets and/or accounts, revoking company licences and confiscating cargoes.

In the murky world of terrorism, one of our major tasks is that related to its financing, which requires the constant vigilance of all countries to ensure that their financial institutions will not be allowed to be used by terrorist networks, which are often connected in one way or another to international criminal cartels, such as those involved in the drug trade and the trafficking of arms. Cyprus, cognizant of the dangers associated with its status as a major regional financial centre, has for many years now been actively engaged in establishing a strong anti-money-laundering regime. According to the United States Department of State *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report*,

> "the Central Bank has in place a strict regulatory framework aimed at preventing abuses within the offshore sector".

The *Report* further notes the cooperation that exists between Cyprus and the United States in fighting this growing international phenomenon. Last year, the Financial Action Task Force conducted a review of Cyprus' anti-money-laundering regime against 25 specific criteria. Cyprus was not identified as a non-cooperative country in the fight against money laundering, while the *Report* clearly states that Cyprus has a comprehensive anti-money-laundering system.

I would also like to mention that, despite the size of our offshore banking sector, the Forum for Harmful Tax Practices of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, in a list of tax havens published in June last year, did not include Cyprus in that list. Furthermore, the International Monetary Fund, in its most recent report on its assessment of banking supervision in respect of the offshore sector, released in July of this year, commented positively on the situation in Cyprus.

In conclusion, we reiterate the determination of the Republic of Cyprus to support the universal fight against terrorism, which is nothing more than an assault on civilization with the purpose of sowing fear in our collective consciousness. We do so in the firm belief that, in order to safeguard civilization as we know it, it is imperative to stand shoulder to shoulder in this common struggle.

Mr. Paolillo (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): We have underestimated the capacity of terrorism to surreptitiously infiltrate our borders and our cities. We have underestimated its lethal and destructive power. We have underestimated the force with which hatred can lead a terrorist to commit acts of homicidal madness that know no limits. Today we are paying the consequences of our failure to foresee such things.

On 11 September, we began to see more clearly. We have not seen the face of the enemy, but we know that he can be identified. We do not know where to find him, but we know that he is among us. We do not know what it is that he seeks, but we know that he is ready to strike at any moment. On 11 September, we learned with astonishment the dark depths of criminal degradation to which terrorism can descend and the extent to which we are still unprepared to confront it.

Our goal now is to prevent the recurrence of other Black Tuesdays. We must eradicate terror from the face of the Earth. We must begin to act immediately, here and now. The measures recently adopted by the Security Council, and which Uruguay is committed to implementing, as well as the numerous conventions, declarations and resolutions we have already adopted, are but a part of the response. We must do much more. Individually or collectively through this Organization, we must, among other things, ratify or adhere to existing conventions on terrorism; promote strict compliance with the provisions of those conventions; and expedite the conclusion of the instruments to combat terrorism that are currently being negotiated with a view to ensuring their entry into force at an early date.

We must further consider the possibility of negotiating a convention to identify as an international crime, for which individuals are criminally liable, the knowledge or tolerance by Governments of terrorists or terrorist activities in their territories. We need to expand judicial cooperation in the field of terrorism through, inter alia, the reciprocal recognition of court awards on terrorism and to promote the adoption of national legislation on terrorism, establishing procedures and mechanisms for the identification, detention, prosecution and punishment of terrorists.

In countries that already have appropriate legislation, we should consider the possibility of imposing more severe penalties on the perpetrators of terrorist acts, excluding the death penalty. We must

simplify the procedures for the extradition of persons accused of terrorism and increase international cooperation to provide States with anti-terrorist techniques and strategies, including measures for the prevention of terrorism.

Within the structure of the United Nations, we need to establish a unit responsible for receiving, centralizing and disseminating information concerning terrorism, including information provided by Governments on the fulfilment of their international obligations in this area. In this respect, I wish to inform the Assembly that, last week, the States members of the Common Market of the South decided to create a permanent working group to organize and assess joint and coordinated actions of the four member States — Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay — against terrorism.

We must establish an obligation for States to transmit to the aforementioned unit all information on terrorists and terrorist activities and on the measures taken by the State to prevent or eliminate such activities, as well as on domestic legislative activities and on the discharge of international obligations and commitments undertaken in this area. We should also establish mechanisms for the strict monitoring of access by non-state actors to conventional weapons, weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, chemical and bacteriological weapons and so on.

Mr. Botnaru (Republic of Moldova), Vice-President, took the Chair.

In implementing these measures, we must bear in mind that our Governments have an enormous responsibility to protect their peoples from terrorism. We must therefore begin our work without delay so as to put an end as soon as possible to the era of terror.

Mr. Zarif (Islamic Republic of Iran): Terrorism is a global menace. The tragic events of 11 September indeed shocked and outraged the international community. They illustrated the scope and magnitude of our common vulnerability — the vulnerability of each and every one of us to the barbarism and inhumanity of a perverted response to injustice and exclusion.

Allow me at the outset to use the words of condemnation and sympathy of President Khatami in his message of 11 September:

> "On behalf of the Iranian Government and nation, I condemn the hijacking and terrorist attacks on public centres in American cities, which have killed a large number of innocent human beings. My deep sympathy goes out to the American nation, particularly those who have suffered from the attacks, and also to the families of the victims. Terrorism is doomed, and the international community should take effective measures in a bid to eradicate it."

Under these tragic circumstances, empathy is the only human response. We cannot but set aside our differences and share the pain and anguish of not only thousands of families who lost their loved ones, but an entire nation that has been traumatized by the terror of this crime. To feel emotional and angry is only human; but we need a great deal of collective reflection and wisdom for a rational and far-sighted response — a response that should focus not only on this horrific crime, but on terrorism in general, wherever and whenever it occurs and, more importantly, on the root causes of injustice and exclusion that can be exploited by demagogues to inflict so much harm on innocent human beings.

This requires vision, serious political will and the active participation and cooperation of all. As a global menace, terrorism needs a global response, founded on inclusion, fairness and international legitimacy. The response to a tragedy caused by blind hatred cannot be indiscriminate retribution, putting many innocent lives at risk; it should focus on bringing the culprits to justice. Terrorists should not be allowed to set the agenda or dictate our response.

Terrorism is a heinous product of the outdated paradigm of international relations. That paradigm was founded on the "will to power" and the arrogance that was associated with it, that is, that "might makes right". As might ruled, injustice prevailed and hatred flourished, and some who were dispossessed became inclined to resort to terror and violence. We must eradicate terrorism by changing the prevalent mentality that provided a fertile ground for the growth of this menace. All those who are serious about fighting terrorism, especially if they are in a position of global power, would be well advised not to resort to statements and policies emanating from emotions intertwined with the arrogance of power, which can only further entrench the mentality that produced terrorism.

The international community has been moving away from that paradigm to a new paradigm founded on equality, stakeholding and the dispersion of power. The purposes and principles set out in the United Nations Charter and the decision of the Assembly to designate this year as the United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations reflect the will of the international community to move forward to this new paradigm. Allow me to quote from the final draft of a forthcoming book that has been prepared by a group of eminent persons selected by the Secretary-General to define the parameters of a new paradigm of dialogue among civilizations:

> "The existence of common dangers — indeed, terrorism — has created this equality in vulnerability that seems to beg as an answer a stronger adherence to common norms, common behaviour and common values, for the dangers we are talking about ... can only be minimized by a universal alliance of rules of behaviour and values.
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> "Dialogue brings with it equal footing ... as it is a process by which we accept, as much as we want to be accepted. We include, as much as we want to be included. We listen, as much as we want to be listened to.
>
> "In these terms, dialogue can perhaps eventually usher in a new paradigm of global relations because it challenges the old paradigm of hegemonism, the politics of power — in other words, of 'might makes right' ... dialogue can be a framework where the weakest is accorded the privilege to be listened to, and where the strongest finds it necessary to explain its case to others."

This Organization and this body provide a unique mechanism to mobilize the international community to address terrorism at its roots. My delegation fully concurs with the comments of the Secretary-General in his thoughtful editorial in *The New York Times* that

> "The United Nations ... provides the forum necessary for building a universal coalition, and can ensure global legitimacy for the long-term response to terrorism."

It is, indeed, an effective mechanism that can draw upon the resources and capabilities of each and every Member State within a rule-based and non-discriminatory framework, thus forging an international consensus in the fight against terrorism.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is fully prepared to participate in and contribute actively to a global campaign against terrorism led by the United Nations. In his letter of 16 September to the Secretary-General, President Khatami proposed that comprehensive and inclusive negotiations should commence to articulate practical and serious global policies and strategies to eradicate the menace of terrorism. He also called for the convening of a global summit, at the earliest possible date, to register and demonstrate the highest international political will to root out terrorism.

In our view, the General Assembly should consider a multifaceted approach to terrorism, which should include, as one of its major components, a comprehensive legal framework. In this context, we need to articulate objective criteria which would enable the international community to identify and combat terrorism, regardless of who the victims or culprits may be. Legitimacy, as well as the sustainability of the global struggle against terrorism, rests on applying a single set of standards to all. It is not acceptable that patterns of alliance, rather than actual engagement in terrorist activities, should become the determining factor. Thus the credibility of the campaign against terrorism is seriously undermined when policies and practices designed to instil terror and fear among the entire Palestinian people receive acquiescing silence, while resistance to foreign occupation and State terrorism is conveniently demonized.

A comprehensive legal framework should also include appropriate guidelines for a rational and rule-based approach across the board, so that no terrorist, no matter where he or she commits his or her acts of terror, can find refuge, a source of support, financing or recruitment in any member of the international community.

We believe that the General Assembly Ad Hoc Committee and the Sixth Committee Working Group should speed up their efforts to prepare the necessary legal documents for adoption by the proposed global summit. The draft comprehensive convention on combating international terrorism is certainly one of the appropriate documents that could be considered by the Ad Hoc Committee and the Working Group. We should endeavour to arrive at a consensus on the key

issues of the proposed convention and pave the way for its adoption.

But the work of the General Assembly on legal frameworks should not lead us to lose sight of fundamental issues of conflict prevention and appropriate political, social and economic strategies to address the mentality that breeds terrorism, as well as the root causes that nurture it.

Terrorism has no religion, no nationality or ethnic background. It is indeed the negation of everything religions stand for. Attempts to attribute the recent acts of terror and violence even to a misguided interpretation of Islam are not only dangerous, but utterly false. Intolerance, extremism and violence have no place in Islam or among its adherents. We must not purport to accord any legitimacy to these acts by associating them with even a misguided reading of Islam, a religion which categorically condemns the killing of a single innocent human being, equating it with genocide against entire mankind. The leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in his speech of 17 September, clearly articulated the Islamic position, when he said:

> "killing of innocent people, in any place and with any type of weapon, be it long-range missiles or nuclear, chemical or biological weapons, carried out by any organization, country or individual, is categorically rejected and condemned."

More recently, in his speech of 26 September, Ayatollah Khamenei articulated that fighting against terrorism is a religious responsibility of all Muslims, amounting to jihad, and called on the Islamic world to take the lead in a serious and comprehensive campaign to eradicate terrorism. Muslim scholars from across the Islamic world have taken similar positions.

It is a source of deep concern that the events of 11 September have given rise to a new wave of Islamophobia and bigotry against Muslims and Arabs. Disturbing trends have surfaced to bring about a clash among civilizations and prevent the realization of dialogue at the national and international levels. The recent event should not be utilized to further stimulate chronic cultural and political misperceptions, misconceptions, stereotypes and prejudices. Furthermore, the abuse of this catastrophe, exemplified by the portraying of an artificial clash between Islam and the West and the increasing suppression of the Palestinian people by Israel, would only exacerbate and aggravate its bitter and inhuman dimensions and implications.

Allow me to conclude by quoting again from the draft work of the Group of Eminent Persons of the United Nations Dialogue among Civilizations:

> "The tragic terrorist attacks of 11 September make the call for a dialogue among civilizations even more compelling ... Whether we are moving towards a clash of civilizations or towards greater human solidarity against those who murder innocents only because they are different is really up to each of us. The choice is neither predetermined nor unavoidable; that is why each of us individually chooses and takes personal responsibility. We can let the small minority take over and throw us into continuous conflict at all levels; or we can enlarge the coalition of those who respect each other's dignity and common humanity, who value the life of our family members as well as the life of our fellow human beings on the other side of the planet."

Mr. Margoaela (Lesotho): The events of 11 September have shocked and saddened us all. While these horrendous terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon and in Pennsylvania were carried out on American soil, their effects have touched all members of the international community and immediately galvanized the legislative organs of the United Nations to pass General Assembly resolution 56/1 and Security Council resolution 1368 (2001) just a day after the events. We are thus grateful for the convening of these meetings at this difficult time and join other peace-loving nations around the world in offering our deepest sympathies to the Government and people of the United States and in particular to all victims and the families of those who lost their lives. Our heartfelt sympathies also go to the families of all other nations that lost citizens in these attacks.

We pay tribute to all those who dauntlessly carried out rescue efforts amidst such devastation. Throughout this ordeal, the American people have shown their resilience as they embark on rebuilding and reassuring terror-stricken citizens of their safety, as well as guarding against further attacks.

Sometimes opportunities present themselves in unique — and often painful — ways. However painful the events of the last three weeks have proven to be, they have presented an opportunity for the international

community to unite with a view to putting an end to the scourge of terrorism. There can be no justification for unprovoked attacks on innocent civilians. The international community needs to strengthen the rule of law to counter terrorism so that all those who initiate, organize and perpetrate these acts, as well as those who aid, support, finance and/or assist these cowardly acts can be held accountable. Since criminal acts of terror do not respect boundaries, enforcement of criminal law against them cannot be the exclusive competence of States.

In this regard, it is worth noting that a new institution, the soon to be established International Criminal Court, will be able to prosecute the kind of crime against humanity carried out three weeks ago. This Court will be merely part of the bigger project for establishing international peace and criminal justice by punishing grave violations of law such as the ones we have just witnessed.

These vicious attacks against innocent civilians from more than 80 countries underscore the need for international cooperation for the early establishment of an international criminal justice institution that will bring justice by holding accountable individuals who target innocent civilians, in complete disregard of humanitarian standards of warfare. All States should therefore extend practical cooperation to the machinery of international criminal justice if we are to eliminate indiscriminate violence against innocent people.

But, of course, there are many more ways to fight terrorism, whenever and by whomsoever it is committed. Terrorism is not only a global menace; it is also a threat to international peace and security. No country can hope to win the war against terrorism alone; hence, enhanced international cooperation remains indispensable if we are to succeed in this war.

The Security Council has once again demonstrated its determination to fight terrorism by unanimously passing resolution 1373 (2001). Full implementation of this resolution is of utmost importance. The General Assembly should urgently endorse the expanded mandate of the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the Centre for International Crime Prevention and provide the Branch with the necessary resources to enable it to carry out its mandate efficiently and effectively.

In the wake of the earlier attacks on the United States embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, as well as the 11 September attacks, it is now evident that terrorist groups will stop at nothing to achieve their goals of winning attention by the very atrocity of their tactics. Our efforts to fight this faceless enemy are constrained by the fact that terrorist groups do not possess a visible economy, land area or identified population; hence, they are less vulnerable to international sanctions. Advances in technology have also made it difficult to trace their covert networks and to police false documents and transhipment through bogus companies. Raising public awareness of the nature and scope of international terrorism and its relationship to organized crime and drug trafficking, among other things, has thus become the international community's urgent priority.

Now that we live in a world where terrorist acts of violence have become commonplace, it is no longer far-fetched nor far off for terrorists groups to acquire and use weapons of mass destruction with devastating consequences for our world order. The indiscriminate nature of these weapons and their extraordinary range of destruction multiplies the challenges and threats we are facing.

The Ad Hoc Committee established by the General Assembly to frame an international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism has over the years endeavoured without success to resolve the outstanding issues relating to the draft convention. The conclusion of negotiations on this convention and its submission to the General Assembly at this session have now become imperative.

A number of international anti-terrorist conventions that empower national courts to prosecute or extradite terrorist suspects have been concluded over the years. However, like all laws, a treaty without enforcement becomes useless. Universal adherence to these instruments is essential for the fight against terrorism, but unfortunately, most of these important conventions have remained a dead letter; hence the urgent need to take steps to raise awareness about these instruments, to encourage States to sign and ratify them and to provide assistance, where needed, for their implementation.

Consolidation of all international instruments on terrorism with a view to closing all existing gaps and loopholes will be necessary to enable law enforcement agencies to effectively cooperate and to enable national courts to investigate and prosecute these crimes. It is

thus imperative for the Ad Hoc Committee established by General Assembly resolution 51/210 to complete its negotiations on a draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism and to submit the convention to the General Assembly for adoption.

The need to finalize the question of convening a high level conference under the auspices of the United Nations to formulate a joint organized response of the international community to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations has now become urgent. The Sixth Committee should finalize this issue at the current session and submit its recommendations to this Assembly without further delay.

Lesotho fully supports all efforts of the international community to combat and eliminate international terrorism. As we refine our strategies for an effective response to terrorism, we must be careful not to violate human rights and international law. Our efforts must preserve the distinction between the guilty and the innocent, between the perpetrators and the civilians and between those who commit atrocities and those who simply share their religious beliefs, ethnicity or national origin. If we allow these distinctions to be blurred and if we abandon the basic principles of law, then we will descend to the level of perpetrators, even while purporting to seek justice. The logic of terrorism is that the ends justify the means, but in our fight against terrorism, the ends cannot justify the means. We must continue to uphold the principles that terrorism seeks to destroy: to strengthen democracy and promote its core values and principles, to respect international law and prevent violence and crimes against humanity. This is the way to deny the perpetrators of this crime their ultimate victory.

Mr. Dauth (Australia): The Australian people are shocked and outraged at the heinous attacks on the United States on 11 September. These attacks and the catastrophic loss of life, injury and destruction are utterly repugnant and inhumane. They can never be justified and must never be repeated. It is incumbent upon all of us to take definitive action to bring the perpetrators of these attacks to justice.

The United Nations has a critical role to play in ensuring that all Member States cooperate in taking the necessary steps to combat international terrorism. We fully support the measures and strategies outlined in Security Council resolutions 1368 (2001) and 1373 (2001). We urge all States to take immediate steps to comply with these resolutions.

Last week, the Prime Minister of Australia announced far-reaching measures to freeze the financial assets of terrorists and terrorist groups. We are now looking at what further measures are necessary to give full effect to Security Council resolution 1373 (2001).

Effective implementation and enforcement of the United Nations-sponsored anti-terrorist conventions will create a formidable international legal regime that will starve terrorists of funds and ensure that those involved in terrorist activities are swiftly brought to justice. We must all work relentlessly to ensure that these conventions have a real and abiding impact.

Australia is party to nine of the 12 United Nations-sponsored anti-terrorism conventions. We are now taking steps to become a party to the remaining conventions as a matter of priority.

This existing framework of subject-specific conventions can, however, be strengthened. The conclusion of a comprehensive convention against terrorism which supplements the existing conventions would strengthen and broaden the international law framework. Therefore, we believe negotiations on the comprehensive convention against international terrorism should be concluded without delay. Australia is determined to work towards this end at the forthcoming meeting of the working group. There can be no doubt that there is a need for such a convention now. We should all commit to making the adoption of this convention one of the key objectives of this General Assembly.

We know that the battle against international terrorism will not be easy or quick. It will require determination and patience, dedication and vigour — a concerted and united approach by us all. Australia's commitment to this common endeavour is — and will continue to be — steadfast and unwavering.

Mr. Kastrup (Germany): The eleventh of September has changed the international agenda. The struggle against terrorism has become a top priority for all of us.

The criminal attacks in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania have challenged us as members of the civilized world. The unprecedented, faceless and barbaric acts were directed against the very fabric that

unites humanity: respect for human life and human dignity, the values of liberty, tolerance, democracy and the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

We welcome wholeheartedly the swift reaction by the General Assembly, and we fully stand by the Security Council, which stated in its resolution 1368 (2001) that the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington were a threat to international peace and security, thus meeting the conditions under international law for resolute action against the perpetrators, organizers and sponsors of the attacks. Against the backdrop of the terrorist threat, Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) has sent out a remarkably vigorous signal of strength. We have already begun, jointly with our partners in the European Union and at the national level, to implement it.

My Belgian colleague yesterday discussed the European Council's landmark declaration of 21 September, which takes a holistic approach to the scourge of terrorism. Indeed, the European Union proposes to integrate as many countries as possible in a worldwide system of security and prosperity. Designing and implementing a comprehensive political, social and developmental strategy for regional conflict prevention must now be, more than ever, a priority on the international agenda. This includes the creation of a basis for political and economic stabilization for the regions of crisis in the Middle East and Central Asia.

Germany will adopt all necessary measures, at the national, European and international levels, to combat terrorism. We shall improve the efficiency of our struggle against terrorism, inter alia, through amendments to criminal law, through optimizing the safety of air traffic both on the ground and in the air and through measures to seek out and to disrupt the financial structures of terrorists. Our police continue to work, together with the American Federal Bureau of Investigation, to dismantle a terrorist network which established footholds in Germany, in other European countries and in the United States, abusing their freedoms and their hospitality. Our intelligence services have done a good job thus far combating international terrorism, also with regard to disclosing terrorist financial structures. Their investigations also brought about the arrest of Osama bin Laden's then-finance chief.

Our struggle against terrorism is a defence of our open and free society and will be conducted with full respect for the rule of law. Terrorism will not induce us to abandon the very values we defend. It will not stop us from passing a modern immigration law aimed at the integration of foreigners. My country is aware, as much as other countries are, that now is the time for decent people to unite against hate and violence, regardless of their origins, their race or their creed. In a statement to the German Parliament on 19 September, Federal Chancellor Schroeder was unequivocal in stating that the attacks in New York and Washington have nothing to do with religion. They are the expression of a criminal mindset. Islamic States and religious communities, too, have been and are targeted by this indiscriminate terrorism. There must be no doubt that there is no political or religious justification for terrorist violence. What we are confronted with is not, and should not be perceived as, a clash of civilizations. What we are confronted with is the terrorists' clash with civilization.

The United Nations is uniquely positioned to coordinate and to invigorate the international response to terrorism. In the face of terrorist violence, hate and chaos, the United Nations is called upon to demonstrate that a world in which humanity can live free from fear and want is not only a common aspiration, but an achievable goal. The Millennium Declaration has laid out the way to go. The peaceful resolution of conflicts, the rule of law, the promotion of sustainable development, equitable distribution of the benefits of globalization and poverty eradication are indispensable landmarks. We trust that the Security Council and the General Assembly will live up to their responsibilities in this regard. Failure to do so would seriously compromise the credibility of the Organization.

The United Nations must engage its full potential to identify and eventually eradicate the deeper roots of terrorism. We must work on the full and timely implementation of the plan of action adopted during the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, hosted by the European Union in Brussels in May. We must ensure the success of the International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held in Monterrey next spring, and we must strive for a successful, development-oriented round of the World Trade Organization in Doha in November.

There is, in our view, a clear opportunity for negotiations on a comprehensive convention on international terrorism to be brought to a successful conclusion, if a spirit of compromise and a sense of common purpose prevail in the Sixth Committee. In a number of areas, the convention would offer a significant added value to existing conventions.

We should also accelerate our pace towards the establishment of the International Criminal Court, as a timely response to combat impunity for crimes such as those perpetrated on 11 September. Mary Robinson was right in characterizing these crimes as crimes against humanity. The Security Council made a pertinent call for maximum adherence to the existing anti-terrorist conventions. Germany, for its part, has signed all 12 conventions, has ratified 10 and is in the process of ratifying, as a matter of urgency, the two remaining ones. Irrespective of the date of ratification, we are already implementing all United Nations conventions in full.

More than ever, the United Nations is called upon to uphold the values of tolerance, dignity and social justice through concrete action and through the promotion of a dialogue among and within civilizations. And the plight of all those who suffer from terrorism must be addressed. This includes notably the people of Afghanistan. They should know that the entire world will assist them in building a better, more humane and more prosperous future, once they have escaped the vicious circle of oppression and misery. I invite the Assembly to work with us to convey this message also through the resolutions on "Emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan and the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security", of which Germany has been and will continue to be the main sponsor.

My delegation stands ready to cooperate with other delegations in living up to the high expectations that the world is now placing on the United Nations.

Mr. de Saram (Sri Lanka): The Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka regrets that he is unable, because of other pressing commitments, to be here to address the General Assembly on the subject of terrorism. He has requested me to read to the Assembly on his behalf the statement he would have made. I have now the honour to do so. It reads as follows:

"On behalf of the delegation of Sri Lanka, I convey to the President warmest congratulations on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly. To his predecessor, Mr. Harri Holkeri, I would also convey Sri Lanka's appreciation for the careful and devoted manner in which he presided over the affairs, and the extremely busy schedule, of the fifty-fifth session of the Assembly.

"The horrors of the morning of Tuesday, 11 September, the spectacle of international terrorism in action, viewed live on television screens the world over, has cast a heavy pall on all of us and on humanity as a whole.

"We are all still deeply moved by what happened in the United States that tragic morning. We will always be affected by the memories we shall carry with us for as long as we live.

"The President, the Government and the people of Sri Lanka have conveyed to the President, the Government and the people of the United States, and all those bereaved, Sri Lanka's profound condolences. On behalf of the delegation of Sri Lanka, I would also today convey to the delegation of the United States the very deepest of sympathies.

"The terrorism of 11 September, so shocking as it was, gave rise to a coming together of the people of this great city of New York in the finest traditions of humanity.

"On 12 September, the Security Council and the General Assembly convened to express their collective condolences; an unqualified condemnation of the terrorism; a determination that those responsible should not go unpunished; and firm concurrence that terrorism threatened the foundations of human society and order and would need to be, and must be, globally removed.

"Let us hope that such a deep sense of the togetherness of all of humanity at times of great crises will continue to be pervasive.

"To ensure that those responsible for the terror of 11 September are brought to justice and are deprived of their support and their resources, whatever and wherever that may be, is a matter of immediate urgency.

"Sri Lanka has assured the Government of the United States of every possible assistance Sri Lanka could provide.

"Terrorism is, sadly, no stranger to Sri Lanka. We in Sri Lanka know terrorism, unfortunately, only too well.

"We know the horrific direct consequences of an act of terrorism: the carnage; the horror; the thousands of unsuspecting innocent lives lost or maimed, in the flash of an explosion; the thousands of families then left bereaved; the countless personal tragedies that terrorism leaves in its wake.

"There are also the larger disruptions of national stability and order — of the economy, of infrastructures, of the customary ways of life.

"Yet we must not forget the elaborate funding, support, and preparation — in a word, the logistics — that lie behind a single act of terrorism: the extensive secret collection organizations, their associates, their collectors, their enforcers, their many other supporters, misguided or otherwise; the ability to transfer millions, perhaps just by word of mouth; the numerous connections to the underworld of crime; the deliberate fanning of the flames of difference or discord in societies into the fanatical hatred from which crucible a suicide mission is born; and above it all there looms the reclusive leader who attracts and directs the misguided and the impressionable.

"The elimination of the supportive financial systems on which terrorism depends must, in Sri Lanka's view, be a principal objective, and that will require a global undertaking — complex, difficult, multifaceted and long-term.

"However, because of the events of 11 September, important beginnings are now being made for that purpose, beginnings which, hopefully, will be of assistance as well to those of us who have known the heavy hand of terrorism for many years past.

"May I recall here my words delivered almost exactly a year ago to the Millennium Assembly about Sri Lanka's experience with terrorism:

"'A criminal organization — whether involved in rebellion against a State or not — must depend for its sustenance outside the law. For its massive operations, and massive weaponry, massive collections of funds are continually required. As funds available for criminal activities within a State, especially a developing State, are inevitably small, and the monitoring of their collection and disbursement relatively simple, fund-collection for such activities is carried out abroad — through international criminal networks, of course — and also, as in all criminal enterprises, through knowing or unknowing front organizations or other entities that now proliferate in many forms, in many countries — often in the guise, sadly, of charitable groups or groups ostensibly concerned with human rights or ethnic, cultural or social matters.'

"I also said:

"'The magnitude of the collection of funds abroad ... and the extensiveness of the reach of the international networks developed for that purpose, boggle the mind. Their receipts seem to exceed the receipts of many transnational conglomerates — all free of tax. Revenues come, of course, from the customary illegal trade in drugs, arms or other merchandise, including the smuggling of humans.

"'But there also exists a far more abundant and seemingly limitless reservoir of funds — namely, expatriates of similar ethnicity settled abroad. As the western media has reported over the past few years from time to time, collections from expatriates abroad for the armed group known as the Tamil Tigers, which is battling the Government of Sri Lanka, are staggering in their magnitude: for example, $400,000 a month from one country; $600,000 a month from another, $2.7 million a month from yet another; and large additional funds from expatriates in still other countries.' (*A/55/PV.21, p. 26*)

"Let me recall also the following sentences from a report submitted by the Secretary-General

in 1997, which often come to our minds in Sri Lanka:

> "'Government authority and civil society are increasingly threatened by transnational networks of crime, narcotics, money-laundering and terrorism. Access by underworld groups to sophisticated information technologies and weaponry as well as to the various instrumentalities through which the global market economy functions are vastly increasing the potential power and influence of these groups, posing a threat to law and order and to legitimate economic and political institutions.' (*A/51/950, para. 143*)

"The many disparate forces of international terrorism do not come together in one monolithic whole. They are variously interconnected in numerous ways, and their international networks are extensive. They are mutually supportive and communicate through the global underworld of crime when special missions are afoot. If international terrorism is ever to be removed from our midst, we must begin with the recognition that international terrorism is a form of global criminality. We must not let ourselves be deceived by the artfully crafted cloaks and mantles of false pretensions. It is the method of terrorism — the murder of innocent civilians and the defiance of the sanctity of life — that defines terrorism.

"The eradication of such a global criminal phenomenon requires a global governmental and non-governmental endeavour in many fields.

"There will have to be numerous bilateral, subregional, interregional and global governmental and non-governmental arrangements.

"To such a global endeavour, this Organization, the United Nations, must contribute. The United Nations is no stranger to the development and administration of global programmes.

"One of the magnificent achievements of the Organization in the last half century has been the transformation that has taken place in global opinion on the relationship that should obtain between the governing and the governed, between the Government and the citizen. It was on the basis of the moral authority of the General Assembly's Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the determined endeavours of the Commission on Human Rights, that this transformation was achieved. The dignity of the individual has now — largely as a result of United Nations leadership in the field of human rights — been placed, as it should be, among the primary priorities of national and international attention.

"The achievement is due, in large part, to the remarkable multifaceted and powerful structure that has been developed within the United Nations system of organizations and agencies over the past 50 years for the protection and promotion of human rights. We know of the large number of general multilateral conventions that were concluded. We are acquainted with their reporting requirements and monitoring committees. We know of the many special rapporteurs. There are training programmes and centres on human rights. We have had special sessions of the General Assembly and special conferences. Numerous trust funds supplement and often exceed the allocations from the regular budget of the United Nations. There is an enormous public relations programme on human rights. There is a High Commissioner for Human Rights. The list of United Nations entities that make human rights one of their major concerns could go on, and they would still not include the hundreds of governmental and non-governmental national and international groups that are themselves engaged in the protection and advancement of human rights, and we have not as yet come to the international and national print and electronic media.

"If only such a powerful edifice would turn its attention to the eradication of the horrors of terrorism that afflict so many in developed and developing countries alike.

"Moreover, let us remember in this connection that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is not limited in scope to ensuring the observance of human rights by Governments alone.

"The Declaration has a far wider purpose: the observance of human rights by all — governmental and non-governmental alike. One need only look to the explicit prescription in article 3 of the Universal Declaration, which requires that everyone has the right to life, and to the provisions of article 30, which prescribe:

> "'Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.'

"An act of terrorism by a non-governmental entity against civilians is surely one of the most heinous violations of the human rights of its victims and, surely, a crime against humanity as well.

"Sri Lanka pledges to follow closely, and cooperate fully in, the work of the United Nations on terrorism. Sri Lanka will, of course, do so pursuant to the resolutions of the Security Council, and in particular resolution 1373 (2001), adopted by the Security Council last Friday night, 28 September.

"Sri Lanka will also follow closely and cooperate fully with such other United Nations programmes against terrorism as shall, hopefully, also develop within the United Nations system, in the knowledge that it is the prevention of the terrorist's strike that should be the principal focus of a global endeavour against terrorism, and that fundamental to such prevention is the interdiction of terrorism's life-blood, the provision of funds made available in millions — knowingly or unknowingly, wilfully or otherwise, directly or indirectly, overtly or covertly — in circumstances in which it is possible that such funds may be utilized to further terrorism's purpose.

"It is surely morally unacceptable in contemporary times, whether there be specific legal provision in international conventions to that effect or not, that funds should flow in their millions — or tens of millions, would perhaps be more exact — from territories under the jurisdiction of one State for the slaughter of innocents in another.

"Sri Lanka will, of course, continue in its active role as the Chair of the General Assembly's Ad Hoc Committee on the elimination of international terrorism, established by resolution 51/210, which was reconvened in February 2001, with a view to concluding, under the auspices of the Sixth Committee, international conventions on particular aspects of terrorism and eventually developing an appropriate comprehensive and focused international legal framework in the light of which Governments would bring to justice those who are responsible for acts of terrorism.

"The world before 11 September was not always encouraging to the Ad Hoc Committee. Two examples should suffice to make that point: the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, adopted by the General Assembly on 9 December 1999, shows as of now only 44 signatories and just four States parties, of which Sri Lanka is one; the International Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, adopted by the General Assembly, on 15 November 2000, shows as of now 123 signatories and just three States parties.

"We know also that our negotiations on international conventions, which often conclude, after lengthy and exhaustive sessions, with lowest-common-denominator provisions leavened by 'constructive ambiguity', have not been as effective as they ought to be. They may salve our consciences, but they contain loopholes through which millions of dollars could pass in questionable transactions in the real world.

"Yet that was the world we knew before 11 September. Let us hope that things will now change for the better.

"Sri Lanka, a party to all the major United Nations conventions relating to terrorism, will continue to urge the widest possible participation in the international conventions that have already been formulated under the auspices of the United Nations on a number of aspects of terrorism. Sri Lanka will also pursue the fullest possible participation in the formulation of the conventions that remain on the agenda of the Ad Hoc Committee on the elimination of international terrorism."

Mr. Dragonov (Bulgaria) (*spoke in French*): I wish first of all to convey my congratulations to His Excellency Mr. Han Seung-soo on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session and to wish him all success in his important mission. I also pay tribute to the President of the Assembly at its fifty-fifth session, His Excellency Mr. Harri Holkeri, who enhanced the effectiveness of our work.

My deepest condolences go to the families of the victims of the barbarous 11 September attacks, among whom were citizens of many of the countries represented in this Hall. Bulgaria is full of admiration for the outstanding courage of New Yorkers and of the entire people of the United States at this difficult moment.

Bulgaria has already associated itself with the European Union statement on terrorism; today I should like to highlight a number of points on behalf of my country.

We are convened at New York for the first session since the adoption of the historic Millennium Declaration. But this is also a tragic moment marked by events that pose an unprecedented challenge to the international community and to civilization itself.

In the aftermath of the 11 September terrorist attacks against the United States, terrorism may be seen more than ever as a global threat to world order, peace and security. Clearly, terrorism undermines the very foundations of modern society, which is founded on the values of democracy, humanism and freedom. Hence, our present debate does not deal solely with the fight against terrorism. We are discussing a deliberate attack on what the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, has called

> "our shared values [and] everything this Organization stands for: ... the very idea of a united human family". (*A/56/PV.7*)

It was an attack against mankind, and mankind must therefore unite to conquer the forces that launched it.

We are convinced that the proper response would include the creation of a global system against terrorism. The United Nations must formulate a targeted and effective mechanism to find legitimate ways and means to prevent terrorism and to track down and punish terrorists, along with all those who support or back them. Bulgaria believes that terrorism in any form or manifestation is inadmissible, but it believes no less firmly that no region, nation or religion in the world should be singled out. The scourge of terrorism threatens all the world's societies and countries irrespective of religion, belief or ethnicity. The commitment of States and Governments from all cultural and geographic regions to act firmly against terrorism must be at the heart of the global response. As an irreplaceable forum for formulating a long-term strategy, the United Nations has a unique role to play in effecting that response.

The Republic of Bulgaria has consistently condemned all forms of terrorism without exception, whether they are national or international in origin, including those that seek legitimacy in political, religious, ethnic or social arguments. My country strictly adheres to the norms and principles set out in the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism adopted in 1994 by the Assembly by resolution 49/60 and reaffirmed in Security Council resolution 1269 (1999). Bulgaria unequivocally stands by the United Nations in its support for the common international effort and in its condemnation of the recent terrorist attacks, which may have targeted one nation but which wounded the entire world.

In a solemn declaration, the National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria voiced its firm support for the establishment of a global coalition against terrorism. The parliamentary declaration states my country's support for joint efforts to combat terrorism and recognizes that the fight against terrorism will be a long-term priority.

Bulgaria welcomed the Security Council's adoption of its resolution 1368 (2001), which condemned terrorism in the wake of the 11 September attacks, with great satisfaction. In our view, Council resolution 1373 (2001), which was adopted soon afterward, forcefully reaffirms the spirit of earlier Council resolutions and of the 12 universal conventions against terrorism. Because of its binding, obligatory nature, it constitutes a major step forward.

This resolution strikes in particular at the financing of terrorism and spells out with unprecedented clarity the obligations of States in this area. Funding is at the heart of every war, including that which terrorism is waging against humankind. Drying up sources of financing is a task that will involve daily coordination and cooperation among

States at all levels — national, subregional, regional and international.

Bulgaria notes with satisfaction that resolution 1373 (2001) recognizes the serious nature of the symbiosis that exists between terrorism and organized crime. My country deems it of the highest priority that the follow-up mechanism to the resolution functions effectively, and it intends to make its full contribution to that end.

We believe it imperative to create a clear, specific and consistent legal framework for the international war on terrorism. As stated in resolution 1373 (2001), it is urgent that all States Members of the United Nations become active parties to United Nations conventions in this field.

For its part, Bulgaria has now acceded to 13 conventions, including all of those dealing with air safety as well as the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials. On 19 March 2001, the Republic of Bulgaria signed the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, adopted by the General Assembly on 9 December 1999. All necessary legal procedures towards its ratification are now under way, so that Bulgarian legislation can be brought into line with that Convention. All of the procedures for the early ratification of the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings have also been undertaken.

In conclusion, I should like to reaffirm Bulgaria's commitment to acting together with Member States to forge a consensus against all forms of terrorism. We fervently believe that the United Nations must play a pivotal role in this respect. As an active and responsible Member of our universal Organization, Bulgaria is ready to shoulder its responsibilities in the quest to create a safer and more prosperous world.

Mr. Baja (Philippines): The terrorist attacks of 11 September were attacks on us all. We, as one indivisible human family, cannot allow the scourge of international terrorism to stand, first, because it is cowardly and deliberately indiscriminate, as it targets innocent and defenceless civilians; secondly, because it is inhuman — a crime against humanity — and violates the right of human beings to go about their daily lives; and, thirdly, because it is ineffective and senseless, for, instead of intimidating us, it strengthens our resolve to combat the viciousness of a few and to join together in rooting out this menace and bringing its perpetrators to justice.

International terrorism is an aberration in the political framework of global cooperation. It thwarts the aspiration of the international community to achieve a world of peace, harmony, equality and charity. The irony was not lost on us that the attacks came when the United Nations was observing the International Day of Peace and was poised to open the fifty-sixth session of the Assembly, whose key goals are to stanch conflict and promote peace and prosperity.

The Philippines itself has been the victim of terrorist acts in the past, and Filipino lives were lost in the 11 September tragedy. We condemn in unequivocal terms international terrorism, its perpetrators and its network of supporters and sympathizers. We will actively join efforts to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, for terrorism is a threat to every society and nation.

Our strong and unwavering stand against terrorism commits us to the responsibility clearly articulated by the President of the Philippines, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. In a policy speech last 26 September, President Arroyo announced the following courses of action to manifest Philippine solidarity with the global war against terrorism.

First, the Philippines will join the international counter-terrorism coalition.

Secondly, we will work closely with the United Nations and other members of the coalition on intelligence and security matters concerning terrorism.

Thirdly, if and when required, the Philippines will make available its airspace and other facilities as transit or staging points.

Fourthly, the Philippines is prepared to contribute logistical support to the coalition in the form of food supplies, medicines and medical personnel.

Fifthly, the Philippines, if asked and upon fulfilment of its constitutional and legal requirements, will provide combat troops to the coalition.

And sixthly, the Philippines will prevent the flow of funds to terrorist groups, particularly those operating in the country. Last Saturday, President Arroyo signed the newly enacted Philippine law against money laundering. Let this attest to our resolve to fight

terrorism on all fronts, in response to Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), which the Council adopted last Friday, 28 September.

The impact of our involvement in the war against terrorism will be measured to a great degree by our own achievements in defeating terrorism within our territorial boundary.

We are addressing our own home-grown terrorist group with full determination. Since our President announced last July an intensified crackdown against the Abu-Sayyaf group, more than 150 people have been arrested or have surrendered, many of them ranking members. We will not relent in this campaign.

In a few weeks, the General Assembly, through a working group of the Sixth Committee, will resume negotiations on a comprehensive convention against international terrorism. These negotiations will be a crucial test of our resolve to strengthen international cooperation against this evil.

We cannot afford to fail this test. We should build upon past successes, from the first legally binding Convention on Offences and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft, adopted almost four decades ago, and through the 12 existing international conventions and various other international, regional and national instruments against this menace. We need to tighten the global legal regime. We need a comprehensive convention in which the international community can identify terrorism as a crime against humanity.

The Philippine delegation stands ready to support further initiatives in the United Nations to eradicate international terrorism. To show our political will and resolve, the United Nations should begin seriously to explore at the highest political level a global strategy that will effectively deal with this problem.

In this regard, we must bear in mind that curing the symptoms alone will not suffice; we need to address the conditions that spawn and permit the growth of terrorism and hatred. It is also important to strengthen international coordination on related issues, such as the sharing of intelligence, coordinated police actions, combating money laundering and the financing of terrorism.

It is without equivocation that the Philippines will extend full support to our common fight for democracy, freedom and justice. Terrorists wish to instigate a religious war. The terrorists who pose as Muslims have been denounced by true Muslims as traitors to the teachings of the Koran. Islam is a religion of peace, forbearance and tolerance. We must make this an opportunity to forge religious understanding, ecumenism and solidarity. As we do so, we must broaden inter-faith dialogue to promote Christian and Muslim solidarity.

We should and shall fight terrorism together until it is eradicated.

Mr. Pfanzelter (Austria): Three weeks ago, this city experienced horrendous terrorist attacks that shocked the world. The Austrian Government reaffirms its unequivocal condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, whatever its motives and origin. Terrorism constitutes a threat to internal and international security, to peaceful relations between States, to the development and functioning of institutions throughout the world and to the enjoyment of human rights. We confirm our steadfast determination to combat this evil. Terrorist attacks in whatever form, for whatever reason and by whoever committed are criminal, unjustifiable acts.

On behalf of the Austrian Government, I would like to take this opportunity to renew our deepest sympathies to the victims and their families and to express our total solidarity with our host city, New York, and our host country, the United States of America. 11 September was one of the darkest days in world history. It is now our common obligation not only to the victims, but also to future generations to demonstrate that we do not accept terrorism and that we stand up collectively against barbarism.

The events of 11 September have brought terrorism to the top of the international agenda. In looking for effective, long-term global solutions, the world turns to the United Nations for guidance and leadership. We all agree that the United Nations has so far lived up to these legitimate expectations. The responses of the Secretary-General, the Security Council and the General Assembly were immediate. Within 48 hours, resolutions strongly condemning the attacks and calling for action against the perpetrators, supporters and financiers of terror were adopted.

Last Friday, the Security Council adopted unanimously resolution 1373 (2001) to combat terrorism globally. That resolution demonstrates clearly the unity, solidarity and determination of the United

Nations in the fight against terrorism. Once implemented, the resolution will cut off terrorists from their various forms of support and facilitate global cooperation to defeat this threat to the peace and security of our nations.

The activity of the Security Council has been complemented and supported forcefully by the General Assembly. The scheduling of this plenary debate in the General Assembly demonstrates the absolute priority the family of nations gives to this issue. Again, the sense of unity, solidarity and determination to act is overwhelming. This debate proves our commitment to taking measures for the immediate future to counter terrorism and to eliminate its roots, motives, resources and support. We are looking forward to a statement or draft resolution by the President of the General Assembly to give clear direction to the work ahead of us.

Let me take this opportunity to identify the measures which, from an Austrian perspective, are now essential in the global response to terrorism.

First, all States must implement without delay Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) of 28 September 2001, in close cooperation with the Security Council. Resolution 1373 (2001) is a powerful instrument and must be applied prudently and responsibly by all States.

Secondly, all States that have not yet done so should sign, ratify and implement the existing universal Conventions against Terrorism. I am pleased to announce in this respect that Austria, by signing the 1999 International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism on 24 September 2001, has now signed all 12 universal conventions endorsed by the United Nations. The other 11 conventions have already been ratified by the Austrian Parliament and we will ratify the Convention on the financing of terrorism very soon.

Thirdly, all States should redouble their efforts to find consensus on the Indian-sponsored project of a comprehensive convention against terrorism. As the Secretary-General so rightly pointed out in his statement yesterday, the necessity for legal precision must not stand in the way of moral clarity, which requires that we recognize no excuse whatsoever for taking innocent civilian life.

Fourthly, during this session of the General Assembly, the Sixth Committee must attach the highest priority to agenda item 166 and ensure that the draft resolution on terrorism incorporates the important developments in the United Nations that have occurred since the tragic events of 11 September.

Fifthly — and this is a very important point — the United Nations must pay particular attention to the broader aspects of the fight against terrorism, especially to the root causes, and contribute to a frank and inclusive dialogue between and within civilizations. The United Nations is the ideal organization to meet this challenge and to develop comprehensive strategies based on the multitude of existing initiatives and projects in this field. One such initiative, which Austria supported from the beginning, is the dialogue among civilizations. Just a few weeks ago, at the Salzburg Dialogue among Civilizations, new paradigms of international relations were discussed. There was consensus that additional efforts to counter intolerance and violence based on religion or belief were needed. Without any doubt, the dialogue among civilizations and other initiatives against intolerance are more relevant today than ever before.

Sixthly, in paragraph 4 of resolution 1373 (2001), the Security Council emphasizes the connection between international terrorism and transnational organized crime, illicit drugs and other illegal activities. In this context, we welcome the statements of numerous delegations that have referred to the Centre for International Crime Prevention in Vienna.

Delegations will be aware that, only one week before the terrorist attacks of 11 September, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice adopted, by consensus, the Plans of Action for the implementation of the Vienna Declaration on Crime and Justice. In chapter VII of that document, specific national and international measures against terrorism are recommended.

The Centre for International Crime Prevention is thereby mandated to take steps to raise awareness of the relevant international instruments and encourage States to sign and ratify such instruments; to take measures to raise public awareness of the nature and scope of international terrorism and its relationship to crime, including organized crime; to continue to maintain existing databases on terrorism; to offer analytical support by collecting and disseminating

information on the relationship between terrorism and related criminal activities; and to draw up concrete proposals to strengthen its capacity to develop and administer the terrorism prevention component of its activities.

With these Vienna Plans of Action, the Centre for International Crime Prevention and its Terrorism Prevention Branch have received a focused mandate, which can serve as a solid basis for enhancing the capabilities of the United Nations in the prevention of terrorism. The substantial changes in national legislation required by Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) constitute a concrete example of a case in which the Terrorism Prevention Branch could immediately provide assistance to States. To this end, its personal and financial resources will have to be strengthened significantly. Taking into account the urgency of focused United Nations action, Austria will make a substantial contribution to help the Terrorism Prevention Branch in its efforts to assist States with the implementation of conventions against terrorism. We hope that other countries will follow suit in providing financial and other support to the Centre in Vienna. As a further initiative, Austria will host a workshop on how to strengthen the capacity of the United Nations by adopting a comprehensive approach in its fight against terrorism.

Finally, all States must support the efforts of the United Nations by adopting additional measures at the national level. In this regard, Austria will be guided by the conclusions of the European Council meeting on 21 September 2001. Last week, the Austrian Government complemented that package of European counter-terrorism policies with a comprehensive national Action Plan on combating terrorist networks, which includes provisions to enhance cooperation between States and their law-enforcement agencies, to share information and intelligence, to track down terrorists' assets and to suppress the financial support of terrorist groups.

In conclusion, let me stress once more that terrorism is an attack on humanity — on our values and our freedom. The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action on human rights stipulate that acts, methods and practices of terrorism are activities aimed at the destruction of human rights, fundamental freedoms and democracy. It is our solemn duty to defend these cornerstones of our common humanity and to combat terrorism wherever it occurs. We owe this not only to the victims of terrorism, but to all of our citizens and future generations, who deserve to live in a free, safe and peaceful world.

Mr. Ould Deddach (Mauritania) (*spoke in French*): I should like at the outset, until a more authoritative voice can do so, to congratulate Mr. Han on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session and to assure him of the full cooperation of the delegation of Mauritania.

I should also like to express to the people and the Government of the United States of America and to the city of New York, which affords our Organization such generous hospitality, the condolences of our delegation as well as of the Government and the people of Mauritania.

The world is today facing a multiplicity of situations and problems whose consequences go beyond borders and threaten peace and security at the national, regional and international level. They thus jeopardize the progress that has been made towards economic and social development. Terrorism is one of the most contemptible manifestations of these various problems. The recent events have served as a summons to the international community, which must fight terrorism with all the legal means that the human conscience will allow.

That is why, in the context of this tragedy, my country, which has always condemned and fought against terrorism, would like to reaffirm today more strongly than ever our condemnation of terrorism, whatever its origin and whatever form it takes. In this connection, we also call upon the international community to strengthen cooperation and coordination so that it can resolutely and forcefully combat this scourge. Furthermore, our Government has included the struggle against terrorism among its chief policy objectives, in the knowledge that only stability based upon the rule of law will allow for the harmonious development of our country.

The hateful crimes that were committed recently in front of our very eyes against the United States of America have been rightly condemned by the entire international community, which has, for once, spoken with unanimity. The Government and the people of Mauritania, shocked by such unjustifiable atrocities, immediately and unreservedly condemned those barbarous acts and expressed their sympathy and

support to the grieving American Government and people at this exceptional time.

Our Government, of course, subscribes without reservation to Security Council resolutions 1368 (2001) of 12 September and 1373 (2001) of 28 September and we endorsed the General Assembly resolution of 12 September that condemned the terrorist attack on the United States. I should like to reaffirm to the Assembly the resolute will of the Mauritanian Government to fully implement the provisions of Security Council 1373 (2001). I should like to recall once again that that resolution fully accords with our Government's desire, expressed in the General Assembly, for the international community to commit itself to concerted and resolute action to effectively fight terrorism.

Furthermore, in this regard, our Government has taken an active part in all regional and international initiatives aimed at jointly combating the phenomenon of terrorism. To this end, we have lost no time in signing and ratifying certain legal instruments relative to the prevention and suppression of international terrorism. The international community can thus rest assured that in its struggle to totally eradicate terrorism it can count on the full cooperation of my country.

Mr. MacKay (New Zealand): We welcome this debate at an early stage of this General Assembly session, particularly as the general debate has been postponed.

May I again, on behalf of all New Zealanders, express our deepest sympathy to the families of the victims of the attacks of 11 September, and to President George W. Bush and the Government and people of the United States. We also pay tribute to Mayor Giuliani for his inspirational leadership during these saddest of days for this great city, and to its resilient people of so many races and faiths.

Three weeks ago we witnessed acts of callous and brutal mass murder. The terrorist attacks here in our host city, in Washington, D.C., and in Pennsylvania killed many thousands of innocent people, men and women, young and old, even infants. No cause can justify these horrors, which were so meticulously planned, coordinated, well funded and intended to attack the heart of our society. Those who assisted in any way with this evil should know that they have put themselves beyond the boundaries of civilized behaviour and humanity. None of us, acting alone, can eradicate this scourge. Because its ramifications are truly global, the foundations for an enduring response must be laid as broadly as possible by the international community, and this Organization should command a role bestowed cooperatively and effectively by all Governments.

Since 11 September the General Assembly has adopted resolution 56/1, which, among other things, stressed the accountability of those responsible for aiding, supporting or harbouring the perpetrators, organizers and sponsors of terrorist acts. And the Security Council has adopted two strong resolutions, resolutions 1368 (2001) and 1373 (2001), which together require every one of us to implement a wide range of measures to prevent and suppress such acts. The question now is what further value the General Assembly can add under the current item and through its Ad Hoc Committee on terrorism and the Working Group.

Member States have previously made commitments in the General Assembly to tackle international terrorism, notably in the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism (resolution 49/60, annex). This Declaration, which elaborates on the application of the United Nations Charter to terrorist acts, strengthens the moral and legal foundations for international action against terrorism.

New Zealand is convinced that international legal instruments are a key element in combating international terrorism. The existing 12 international treaties provide a strong framework for action and cooperation at the national and international level. All States should become party to them as a matter of priority. We ourselves are attempting to fast-track our domestic processes for becoming party to the terrorist bombing Convention and for ratifying the terrorist financing Convention, in response to the events of 11 September.

But possible gaps remain in that international framework, for example, in relation to the threshold for what is an "international" terrorist act. There are also questions, possibly, about how far the Conventions extend to attacks on private facilities. My Government believes there is scope for more robust mechanisms for cooperation on the detection, prevention and investigation of terrorist acts than is found in some of the earlier Conventions. We should also consider as a matter of urgency the need for a comprehensive terrorism convention when the working group meets

later this month. Such a convention might seek to cover the gaps in existing instruments, while being careful to avoid undermining or weakening them.

It goes without saying also that international agreements must be rigorously enforced by Member States. Terrorists must be deprived of training, funding, support and shelter. Those States which assist or even knowingly tolerate the presence of international terrorists on their soil will have to face the consequences.

The United Nations can contribute to the fight against terrorism in many practical ways, including by addressing the underlying causes of injustice that give rise to the killing of civilians all over the world — in Europe and Asia, as well as the Middle East. It is important to try to address the alienation of the young in situations of economic deprivation and political tension and uncertainty so that they do not, through a sense of injustice and lack of hope, become fertile ground for terrorist recruitment.

The United Nations contribution can also involve information collection and exchange and technical advice in best practice methods and technologies for combating terrorism. The efforts of the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the Centre for International Crime Prevention, as well as the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) continue to be very important. They deserve enhanced political and financial support.

The battle against terrorism must be fought on many fronts, because it is a complex phenomenon. Measures to halt the illicit trade in narcotics and small arms and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction are all part of the struggle. So are steps to improve aviation security, to prevent money-laundering and to ensure the safety of hazardous — including chemical and biological — materials.

The alarm sounded on 11 September. We must collectively confront the brutal and ruthless forces which drive international terrorism and ensure that the international community is protected in future from terrorist acts.

Finally, like many who have spoken previously, New Zealand is deeply concerned at the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan, which has been exacerbated by the terrorist attacks of 11 September. I am pleased to announce that on 1 October the New Zealand Government decided to provide a contribution of 1 million New Zealand dollars to the United Nations Consolidated Appeal for Afghanistan.

Mr. Shobokshi (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): The disgraceful terrorist acts committed against the United States on 11 September 2001 were, by any standards, ugly crimes. They should be condemned by every person with a grain of faith, and by all peace-loving peoples who believe in human rights and uphold principles and values.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, its monarch, Government and people have condemned the criminal acts that resulted in great loss of life, tremendous destruction and property damage. The Government has issued a declaration condemning this criminal act as contrary to all religious values and humanitarian cultural concepts. The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques sent the President of the United States of America a message in which he underlined his strong denunciation and condemnation of such acts. His Majesty also conveyed his sincere condolences to the families of the victims and to the friendly people of America. He confirmed Saudi Arabia's solidarity with the international community in confronting terrorism and fighting it in all its forms and manifestations. In a telephone conversation, His Royal Highness, the Crown Prince, First Deputy Prime Minister and Commander of the National Guard, conveyed his condolences to the President of the United States and to the American people for the fallen victims of these painful acts of terrorism, acts condemned and rejected by all religious faiths. Prince Abdullah expressed Saudi Arabia's complete readiness to cooperate with the American Government in all its efforts to uncover the identities of the perpetrators and to bring them to justice.

Condemnation of these criminal terrorist acts was not limited to the official authorities; it included all segments of Saudi society. The Grand Mufti — the chief Islamic jurist in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Chairman of the Senior Ulema, Islamic scholars — affirmed that the explosions that took place in the United States, the plane hijackings that frightened peaceful people, or unjustly killed people, were forms of aggression and oppression that Islamic law does not condone. Indeed, it considers them a major sin.

The Chairman of the Supreme Judicial Council in the Kingdom affirmed that the horrific, barbaric act that took place in the United States was beyond comprehension. Scenes of the carnage were beyond what any Muslim mind could accept or comprehend. He added that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, home to the Two Holy Mosques and governed by the teachings of Islam, condemned those brutal acts. So it is no wonder that the Kingdom considers it anathema for Muslims to commit such deeds or protect such criminals. He said that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia had declared, through its religious leaders, before any Saudi aircraft was ever hijacked, that such acts were criminal, regardless of whether the passengers were Muslim or not. They considered such acts to be oppressive and said that aggression and terror against people were among the greatest of sins.

While my country denounces this inhumane terrorist act, it also emphasizes the need to avoid linking terrorist acts with any particular religion or ethnic group, whether such linkage is made by Government bodies or the news media. Such linkage would not help in effectively combating terrorism, and is an affront to truth and reality. Saudi Arabia is concerned about the attempts of some news media and politicians to exploit this tragedy in order to arbitrarily accuse Islam and Muslims. Islam is absolutely innocent of such criminal acts; they are gross and flagrant violations of Islamic values and moral principles.

My country is deeply concerned about certain widespread phenomena in some societies that aim to discriminate against religious beliefs, especially Islam. There is also an attempt to link Islam with some negative phenomena, such as terrorism and fanaticism, forgetting that Islam rejects these anomalies, while it promotes tolerance and cooperation.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has suffered from terrorist acts in the past. Therefore, it sympathizes with what the United States is going through now. The Kingdom has exerted sustained efforts for a long time to combat this dangerous phenomenon. We have taken appropriate measures on all levels. At the national level, we have enacted laws that punish perpetrators of terrorist acts. Combating terrorism became a principal subject in the curriculum of our colleges and universities. At the regional level, the Kingdom was among the first signatories of the pan-Arab Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism, which was adopted by the League of Arab States in 1998. It also signed the anti-terrorism Convention of the Organization of the Islamic Conference. At the international level, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has acceded to numerous United Nations Conventions relating to terrorism. These include the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation — the Montreal Convention. The Kingdom is well on its way to acceding to or signing the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and the Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism.

My Government believes that accession to anti-terrorism conventions should be accompanied by sincere and serious intentions to combat this dangerous phenomenon and eradicate it. We call upon all Member States to categorically condemn all terrorist acts that constitute a grave violation of the purposes and principles of the United Nations, threaten international peace and security and endanger friendly relations among States, as well as impede cooperation among them.

Concerned about this pernicious scourge, and being fully determined to combat it, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia supports all efforts by our Organization through its relevant resolutions and conventions, particularly Security Council resolutions 1368 (2001) and 1373 (2001), both of which condemn categorically and in the strongest terms the horrible terrorist attacks that took place in the United States of America.

My country's delegation, in its efforts to combat this dangerous phenomenon, supports the convening of an international conference on terrorism. We believe that the need is urgent and that the time has come to convene such a conference. It should have as one of its main objectives an accurate definition of terrorism that differentiates between terrorism as a dangerous phenomenon posing a threat to the security and stability of the international community and the right of peoples to struggle against and resist occupation, according to international law and the United Nations Charter.

Although the Arab and Muslim peoples are targets of terrorist acts, there are vicious attempts to falsely accuse Arabs and Muslims of terrorism. Some biased media repeat unjust hearsay about Islamic terrorism, an Islamic threat and an Islamic bomb. It is as if only Muslims commit terrorism. We have not heard or read that bombs have religions and terrorism

has religious sects. Nobody would repeat such lies unless he or she was arrogant, malicious or ignorant of history. Arabs and Muslims cannot be accused of terrorism because some person or a group from among them commits terrorist acts. Terrorists are found among every sect and religion and in all human societies. Islam prohibits terrorism because God Almighty cannot be but just and He forbids injustice against human beings.

God criminalizes oppression and aggression against non-criminals. Killing the innocent is a major sin; it is considered similar to perversion on Earth and destruction of crops and progeny. God Almighty says,

"Let not
The hatred of others
To you make you swerve
To wrong and depart from
justice. Be just: that is
Next to piety." (*Holy Koran. V:8*)

Islam considers inflicting collective punishment an act of abomination, aggression and wickedness. Islamic law was aware of this danger 14 centuries ago. It established the first complete law against terrorism. Thus, Islamic jurisprudence considers oppression and banditry as forms of terrorism. The Supreme Judicial Council in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia imposed capital punishment on those who committed crimes of terrorism and sabotage. This was based on God's words in the Holy Quran:

"There is the type of man
Whose speech
About this world's life
May dazzle thee,
And he calls Allah to witness
About what is in his heart;
Yet is he the most contentious
of enemies.
When he turns his back,
His aim everywhere
Is to spread mischief
Through the earth and destroy
Crops and progeny
But Allah loveth no mischief."
(*Holy Koran. II:204, 205*)

God Almighty says again,

"That if any one slew
A person — unless it be
For murder or for spreading
Mischief in the land —
It would be as if
He slew the whole people." (*Holy Koran. V:32*)

Arab Governments and peoples condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. This position is based on their faith and culture. Nevertheless, the Arabs call for avoiding any confusion between terrorism and the right of people to defend their independence, freedom and human rights when they are subject to foreign occupation, dominance and oppression, which are violations of international law and norms of conduct.

General condemnation of terrorism necessarily extends to State terrorism, as practised by Israel continuously against the Palestinian people. Paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 40/61, adopted at the fortieth session in 1985, referred to official terrorism practised by some States. This resolution makes a clear distinction between terrorism, which is a criminal act and an unlawful form of warfare, and armed resistance to colonialism, racism and foreign occupation, which is a legitimate struggle based on the principle of self-determination, which is embodied in the Charter of the United Nations, international law and other international resolutions. In paragraph 9, the resolution calls upon all Member States to work, individually, collaboratively and with relevant United Nations organs, towards the gradual elimination of the causes of international terrorism.

There is no doubt that States where terrorist acts take place have the right to pursue the wrongdoers, arrest them and put them on trial. The objective should be to eradicate all forms and manifestations of terrorism not to exact revenge on the people. The history of terrorism shows us that the best way to suppress it is to explore its roots, identify the causes that engender it and find just solutions to the various conflicts.

What happened in the United States places great responsibilities before the international community. Terrorism was not born on 11 September 2001 and will not be eradicated by military and security means alone. It requires concerted efforts by the international community to use all means available to fight this evil.

The international community is required to deal with terrorism in all its aspects in a spirit of responsibility and seriousness. The best context for

such action is the United Nations, which embodies the international community. It alone is entitled to define terrorism and to make international decisions to fight it. International law should be the basis for dealing with terrorism and for deciding what measures to take against it. The mere use of force could lead to the arrest of a few suspects while inflicting mass pain and suffering on multitudes of innocent people.

In confronting terrorism, international cooperation in facing terrorism requires an agreed definition of the phenomenon in legal terms, not a whimsical definition based on personal interests and objectives. All faiths, creeds and values must be respected and cannot be tarnished under the pretext of defending freedom of speech. Human rights issues should not be politicized, and attempts to impose on other nations values that might contradict their beliefs and principles should cease. No double standards should be used in dealing with international problems. Therefore, international laws and legitimacy should be respected.

Terrorism has become a universal phenomenon that is not limited to one ethnic group, people or faith. It exists in every culture and in almost all States. Combating it also needs to be universal in nature and extent. Only through a coordinated plan in the context of the United Nations can our common efforts bear fruit, eradicate terrorism, protect the lives of the innocent, maintain the sovereignty of States and the security and stability of the world.

Mr. Al-Hinai (Oman) (*spoke in Arabic*): The General Assembly is meeting today to discuss a matter of utmost importance and seriousness: measures to eliminate international terrorism, which coincides with present incidents and world developments that have never before been witnessed. The world was shocked by the events of 11 September, and my Government was stunned and deeply saddened by the terrorist attacks that took place in Washington, D.C., New York and Pennsylvania and the resulting human and material losses.

My Government, while condemning these terrible acts, is confident that the American people will overcome the suffering resulting from these terrorist acts. Expressing its complete solidarity with the United States, my Government fully believes that justice will be served on those who perpetrated these attacks, and that the international community would undoubtedly stand with the United States to preserve the peace and security of all peoples in the world in a more transparent manner.

I am greatly honoured in this context to quote His Majesty the great Sultan, may God preserve him, in his opening address at the regular session of the Council of Oman on Tuesday, 25 September 2001, at which His Majesty said:

> "In foreign policy, the basic principle is to stand on the side of truth and justice and of the strengthening of brotherhood and bonds of friendship, and to participate in ensuring international security and peace. We are confident that the establishment and maintenance of peace in the world are essential for the benefit of all mankind. Peace can be maintained among all nations of the world only when it is founded on a solid basis of justice, cooperation and understanding among all countries. We are convinced that all forms and manifestations of terrorism, and from whatever source, are an attack against peace, which is so cherished by all of mankind, and against international peace and security, which we seek with other nations to consolidate. Proceeding from this — as we have always done throughout our blessed renaissance — we condemn and reject terrorism. We call upon all to counter terrorism and remedy its causes."

In the light of these developments, it has become clear that terrorism is a world phenomenon that knows no borders and is not confined to specific geographical locations. On the contrary, its activities are widely spread, come in numerous forms, and reach countries and peoples all over the world — especially with today's increasing tendency towards globalization and the attendant increase in the technological abilities to transcend borders in an unprecedented manner. We must, therefore, find the means to prevent this danger and root it out, so that terrorism is not allowed the opportunity to wreak havoc on the resources of nations and so that peace and prosperity may prevail in all parts of the world.

Firmly convinced of the danger of terrorism and its negative effects on international peace and security, my Government believes that combating this phenomenon can only be achieved through concerted international efforts and strengthening cooperation

among States. My country has joined numerous conventions relevant to combating this phenomenon. And in this context, my delegation feels that attempts to combat terrorism will only succeed through the commitment of all States to the principles and provisions of international law and the Charter of the United Nations and through firm resolve in standing up to terrorism. This requires placing importance on monitoring the implementation of all provisions of relevant international conventions, especially given that this phenomenon could become more dangerous and complicated in the light of the resurgence of extremist tendencies, whether they be national, ethnic, religious or doctrinal.

My delegation also calls for the non-use of double standards in dealing with terrorist acts. It also calls on States not to confuse such activities with the right of peoples to struggle against occupation and to defend their land, because such a struggle is a right guaranteed under international law. At the same time, we reaffirm that the principles of Islam and the teachings of its tolerant shariah call for tolerance and for the renunciation of all forms of violence, terrorism and extremism. My delegation calls for the renunciation of any link between terrorism and Islam, so that this war against terrorism not be transformed into a conflict among religions and civilizations.

While my delegation supports the efforts exerted to combat the phenomenon of terrorism, we hope that such efforts will not discourage the international community from continuing its endeavours to find final and equitable solutions to numerous chronic questions. Foremost among them is the Palestinian question and the Arab-Israeli conflict, especially in the light of the increased acts of violence by Israeli forces against the unarmed Palestinian people, using the preoccupation of world public opinion with the developments unfolding on the international arena.

Finally, my delegation, while reaffirming its condemnation of terrorism, believes that it is of the utmost importance that an international conference be held on terrorism, with the aim of considering the views and proposals of countries, and in the hope of eradicating this international scourge. We also reaffirm the importance of concerted international efforts to combat terrorism within the scope of international law and under the umbrella of the United Nations so that such efforts can be crowned with the desired success.

Mr. Olhaye (Djibouti): Let me begin by expressing Djibouti's deepest and most profound sympathies to the Government and people of the United States of America and to other nations and people directly affected by the tragic events on 11 September.

The Government and the people of Djibouti swiftly and unreservedly condemned the terrorist attacks that took place in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania on 11 September, and we vehemently expressed our revulsion at such ghastly and evil acts perpetrated against innocent civilians. The resolve of the international community was, and continues to be, unanimous, as demonstrated by the overwhelming and instant reactions and decisive resolutions taken by the Security Council and the General Assembly. As stated by the American Red Cross, "Disasters create an abrupt change in reality".

Indeed, we are living in a new reality. We need to coalesce and fashion together new approaches to international peace, security and stability. We welcome the timely Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), adopted last Friday, which demands that all countries deny safe haven to terrorists, sever financial, political and military ties with terrorist organizations and freeze their assets everywhere.

The action by the Security Council last Friday, and the decision by the General Assembly to hold this crucial meeting — both in the aftermath of those deliberate and deadly attacks carried out against the United States — clearly underscore the emerging international determination and solidarity to fight terrorism. What happened on 11 September was mass murder against innocent people of all nationalities, faiths and walks of life. We are all touched. For most of us this could be the most dramatic thing that has happened in our lifetime. We are all still in a state of shock and disbelief. As one doctor, overwhelmed by the degree of the carnage, put it, there is a limit to what the mind can take.

As so many have accurately described, 11 September was truly the day the world changed. The sheer heroism, selflessness and tireless efforts by so many, including average New Yorkers and Washingtonians desperately seeking to save those caught in the maelstrom, will forever form an indelible and inspiring memory in the hearts of mankind. It will

take us months, if not years, to fathom what has happened. We are all changed by this calamity.

As nations and peoples, we have all suffered from terrorism at one time or another. In fact, many of us still do, in the form of either domestic terrorism or international terrorism. Djibouti suffered from terrorism. It has also cared for victims of calamities and terrorism in other countries — the last instance involved the victims of the attack on the *USS Cole*, in Aden. But it is perplexing how a terrorist group could turn aeroplanes into missiles and master the training, logistics and coordination required to execute such a sinister plot. How they could do that for years without being detected boggles the imagination. The sheer magnitude of this level of terrorism, its sophistication and its chosen instruments send a signal to the world that a new day has indeed begun.

While the Al Qaeda group, under the control of Osama bin Laden, is suspected to be the perpetrator, the reality of terrorism goes far beyond any particular border, faith, creed or political system. In the case of the attack on America there was obviously a large, international network, huge hoards of cash and sufficient time and patience to target several American national symbols for simultaneous destruction. Terror on this scale was inconceivable, unseen and unheard of.

Given the sheer magnitude of these heinous acts of terrorism, the toll in human tragedy and the material and moral damage inflicted, we are today all united to work together to eliminate terrorism. However, the commitment to eradicate or contain terrorism — which is an ominous threat to peace, stability and security everywhere — is beyond the capacity of any one country.

The response of the Taliban movement in Afghanistan has so far been unclear, and at times contradictory to the direction of the Security Council, which in its earlier resolutions demanded the handing over of the main suspect and the closing of all clandestine training camps in the territories under its control. We strongly urge them to comply with all Security Council resolutions, including the latest one adopted on Friday, so that the question of bin Laden's guilt or innocence can be judiciously established prior to the commencement of any hostilities in their country.

The people of that wretched country, Afghanistan, are once again gripped by desperation and fear as they flee the cities and towns because of the potential threat of attacks. A major disaster is shaping up. Millions of refugees are leaving the country, and millions are facing starvation inside the country. The situation is so serious that no one can say with certainty what the extent of the looming crisis will be, given the impending strikes, severe food shortage, removal of international aid workers and the closure of borders by all the neighbouring countries. We laud the efforts of the Secretary-General to enhance international awareness about the plight of the Afghan people and to prepare the ground for the impending exodus. His appeal for urgent humanitarian assistance needs to be seriously heeded by the international community.

While these unprecedented attacks took place here in the United States, there is widespread concern that the next attack could be almost anywhere, with the possibility of multiple strikes. Such a possibility underscores the need for collective, coordinated international preparedness and response. In such situations separate and unilateral responses will be ineffective, cumbersome and impossible to carry out unless there is a suitable international mechanism in place. The sophisticated movement and training of people, communications, funds and materiel require a robust system of surveillance and monitoring.

We therefore concur with the Secretary-General in calling for a central role for the United Nations. The Organization provides the forum necessary for building a universal coalition and, equally important, ensures global legitimacy for the medium- to long-term response to terrorism. Additionally, there are a dozen international conventions and protocols in existence designed to address different facets of terrorism. They need to be looked at all over again with a view to harmonizing and streamlining them. International cooperation cannot be seen as a formality, a rubber stamp, a routine, or a one-way street in which everyone is expected to comply, with the exception of a few.

Terrorism of course does not exist in a vacuum. Therefore, beyond the issue of acts of terrorism and what must be done to prevent them, we need to focus on the deep root causes and their accompanying attitudes, frustrations and attendant economic and political conditions. We need to examine the possible association with poverty, marginalization, economic

decline, political oppression, denial and repression. We must direct extraordinary efforts toward resolving intractable conflicts, particularly the Palestinian question, which, without a doubt, is the breeding ground for most manifestations of ill will, disenchantment and despair.

If the new global order means anything to huge sectors of mankind, and if terrorism is to be contained — if not prevented — then we must begin to deal with the possible underlying causes in an earnest way. We cannot afford to brush them aside forever.

If, however, we fail to find the time and patience needed to examine them seriously, then the world will indeed change, and not for the better. It need not be so; it cannot be so. That seems to be the message contained in the recent action of the Security Council, and the meaning of this extraordinary series of General Assembly meetings on terrorism. If in the end we are successful, even in a small way, in containing the evil phenomenon of terrorism, it will at least represent something positive emanating from the terrible tragedy in the United States.

Finally, I wish to state again that the Government and the people of Djibouti firmly and explicitly stand with the United States of America in particular and with the international community in general in fighting terrorism.

Mr. Dangue Réwaka (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): The terrorist acts perpetrated on United States soil on 11 September 2001 strikingly remind us of the urgent need for the international community to adopt a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. To be sure, today's item, entitled "Measures to eliminate international terrorism", has been on the Assembly's agenda since 1972, but work towards the formulation and adoption of a binding international legal instrument on this subject still remains to be done. The numerous existing conventions on the suppression of acts of terrorism can be useful reference points here. In my view, completion of this task would honour the memory of innocent victims of acts of terrorism worldwide.

At this solemn time my thoughts naturally go first to all the victims whose precious lives were callously destroyed before the stunned and powerless eyes of millions of television viewers on all continents on that day of infamy, 11 September 2001.

Let me reaffirm the position of my country on this item. Gabon most firmly and unreservedly condemns terrorism in all its forms. Because it violates the fundamental right of every human being to life, because it arbitrarily and indiscriminately strikes innocent victims and because it feeds on the terror that it spawns, terrorism poses a genuine, grave threat to peace and security both for individuals and for nations.

Let us make no mistake. Because of the myriad threats it poses and its evil consequences in every sphere of international relations, including global economic relations, there must be broad international cooperation to put an end to terrorism, its ramifications and the support from which it benefits. For its part, Gabon is determined to join the rest of the international community in all agreed initiatives to deal with this qualitatively new scourge. Our services are ready to cooperate with those of all other countries to that end, for in the name of what cause could one reasonably justify the perpetration of large-scale terrorist crimes? How can we accept, without renouncing universal human ethics, that the end can always and everywhere justify recourse to such extreme means? That is why we are convinced of the need to accelerate the process of negotiations in the General Assembly's Ad Hoc Committee to draft a comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

We can already welcome the consensus that has formed on the need for an effective international anti-terrorism regime. Here, the international community must act with dispatch and with unity. It is necessary and of the highest priority to search for effective responses sufficient to slay this modern-day dragon. The international community must now therefore focus on this issue — but without omitting discussion of questions of substance. We would hope to gain understanding so as to be able to take better action, but without engaging in justification. We need to understand in order better to restore the balance that may have been disturbed.

We must therefore focus on this subject in a framework that is not only political, but also scientific — analytical and multisectoral — thus making it possible to attain a unified view of terrorism from all perspectives. Such a unified viewpoint can result only from a comprehensive approach to the subject. Here, we hail the international community's efforts thus far, both in the General Assembly and in the Security Council.

But we must note that the solutions proposed to date have been fragmentary or limited. Their political nature has a considerable effect on their expected effectiveness, because they consistently depend on our various national legal systems for implementation. Our States have different legal systems, apart from the fact that they have freedom with respect to endorsing the recommendations of the international community. This raises the question of the effectiveness of existing measures aimed at eradicating terrorism.

In the present context, the international community must spare no effort to study terrorism in depth. It is now or never: the international community must adopt a coherent, practicable legal framework that would address the entire structure of terrorism, from fact-finding to framing legal definitions to punishment. To that end, a commonly accepted definition is needed, and we must articulate all the elements of the legal framework for the international community's suppression of acts of terrorism.

The General Assembly could convene a special session for the definition of terrorism and could also request the International Law Commission to devote one of its upcoming sessions exclusively to the technical aspects of a system for the suppression of terrorism.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.

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General Assembly

Official Records

Fifty-sixth session

16th plenary meeting
Wednesday, 3 October 2001, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Han Seung-soo ..... (Republic of Korea)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 166 (*continued*)

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Report of the Secretary-General (A/56/160 and Corr.1 and Add.1)

Mr. Koonjul (Mauritius): We are thankful to the Mayor of the city of New York, Mr Giuliani, for his inspiring statement on Monday morning. We take this opportunity to reiterate to him and to the people of New York our deepest sympathy following the tragedy of 11 September. We commend the people of the United States for the courage and resilience they have demonstrated and continue to demonstrate following the terrorist attacks.

The terrorist acts carried out on that fateful day in New York and Washington, D.C., remind us of the vulnerability of all countries, regardless of their state of preparedness. No country is immune from this kind of attack. It is a reminder that terrorists can, at the most unexpected moment, hit at the very heart of a free and peaceful society, causing tremendous human and material damage.

In the modern world of freedom, democracy and tolerance, it is simply unimaginable that some people choose to have recourse to such evil methods to express any form of anger and frustration, if there is any at all. In fact, there is no justification whatsoever for terrorism and no concession can be made to those who commit terrorist acts. Terrorism is simply evil and inhuman. It flouts the principles and objectives of the United Nations Charter. As such, it is an ever-present threat to international peace and security. This is why it is important for the international community and all people who believe in freedom, justice, peace, tolerance and democratic values to take a determined resolve to combat and eradicate this scourge.

With the numerous international conventions on terrorism, one would have hoped that we had adequate measures at our disposal to deal with terrorism. Unfortunately, this is not the case. It goes on to prove that either the instruments are not comprehensive enough or that, more importantly, we have failed in implementing them fully and effectively.

Last Friday, the Security Council took a bold and historical step by adopting the comprehensive and far-reaching resolution 1373 (2001) to deal with all aspects of terrorism in a global and holistic approach. The resolution, inter alia, calls upon Member States to become parties to the relevant international conventions relating to terrorism, including the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism of 9 December 1999. We urge all Member States to take immediate action to give effect to the provisions of the resolution.

All States must make a firm commitment to refrain from providing any form of support, active or passive — including political, moral or diplomatic support — to any terror group, irrespective of the ideologies and convictions it represents. This is all the

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more important in order to prevent terrorists from using the territory of one Member State to perpetrate acts of terror in the territory of another State.

Terrorists have no human or moral values, no respect for human rights and, in fact, no religion. The only religion they profess is to terrorize, maim and inflict maximum human suffering and material damage. It is therefore important not to confuse terrorism with any ethnic group or religion. The fight against terrorism is a fight by all nations, and should be undertaken in the framework of international solidarity and cooperation. It must be as comprehensive and as broad-based as possible, in terms of both action and support, if it is to be viable and successful. It must also be carried out in accordance with international law so as to deny terrorists sympathy from any quarter.

It is time for each of us to take action at the national level and for all of us, collectively, to take action at the international level, to pin down all terrorists and prevent them from planning and carrying out their shameful and heinous acts. In this regard, it is essential for all States to be able to fully implement the existing conventions on international terrorism. Likewise, it is important that procedures for international search and arrest be harmonized in order to bring the perpetrators of terrorist attacks to justice. It will also be very important for all States to cooperate at the international and the regional level to exchange information and intelligence on the activities of suspected groups.

It is important, however, to realize that many of us may not have the necessary expertise to frame appropriate legislation incorporating the provisions of international conventions into our own domestic laws. We call on the Secretary-General and those countries which have such expertise to provide the necessary technical assistance to countries in need.

We are fully aware of the close and complex link between terrorism, organized crime, drug-trafficking, the illegal exploitation of natural resources and the illegal trafficking and easy availability of small arms and light weapons. At the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects, held last July, many States rightly pressed for the inclusion in the Programme of Action of measures that would stop States from selling small arms and light weapons to non-State actors. Despite our efforts and determination, small arms and light weapons continue to get into the hands of terrorist groups, rebels and other unlawful elements. Coming from the African continent, we daily witness the immense havoc caused by such weapons. The recent tragedy has once more demonstrated that all nations should act in a decisive and coherent manner to stop the sale of small arms and light weapons to non-State actors. We cannot possibly achieve success in fighting terrorism if we do not take comprehensive steps to prevent all kinds of weapons, including biological, chemical and other weapons of mass destruction, from falling into the hands of terrorist groups.

We are grateful to the delegation of India for presenting the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. We are equally appreciative of the draft convention to combat nuclear terrorism, submitted by the Russian Federation. We support the proposals contained therein and hope that all Members will approach both drafts in a constructive and productive manner with a view to their early adoption.

My country has always been supportive of all international initiatives designed to combat international terrorism. We were among the first few countries to sign the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime last year. We recently enacted the Economic Crime and Anti-Money-Laundering Act, which allows for the screening and constant monitoring of all operations in our offshore sector. We have ratified a number of important conventions dealing with international terrorism, and we are in the process of ratifying the remaining ones.

We once again pledge our full commitment to work together with the international community to eradicate forever terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and make this world a safer place for future generations.

Mr. Fonseca (Brazil): I should like to reiterate our profound sympathy for and solidarity with all those who have suffered as a result of the tragic loss of life caused by the grievous terrorist attacks of 11 September. Those despicable acts were viewed with outrage in Brazil. Our thoughts go out to the victims and their families.

The attacks on the United States sought to sow fear and paralysis. They failed to do so. The sober but determined response of the American people has inspired respect and solidarity and helped forge a

global sentiment that the time has come to deal decisively with terrorism.

The international community is meeting here to reaffirm our categorical condemnation of terrorism and lay out a comprehensive strategy to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. There can be no justification whatsoever for terrorist acts. They are cowardly and barbaric acts that cannot be admitted under any pretext, whether political, religious or ideological. The perpetrators of terrorist attacks must be brought to justice, along with those that provide them with support and harbour them.

The Brazilian position on this issue is clear and unequivocal. The federal Constitution of Brazil establishes the repudiation of terrorism and racism as being among the principles governing our international relations. It also places terrorism among those heinous crimes whose perpetrators cannot benefit from the possibiiity of bail, grace or amnesty.

As stated by the Brazilian Minister of External Relations, Ambassador Celso Lafer, the terrorist attack on the United States on 11 September represented a direct threat to all civilized nations and to our democratic values.

Brazil endorsed the prompt action taken by the General Assembly and by the Security Council in condemnation of the attacks and reaffirmed our determination to combat terrorist actions with all means at our disposal, as such attacks represent a threat to international peace and security. We welcome the adoption of Security Council resolution 1368 (2001), establishing the foundations for concerted international action, and also the adoption last week of resolution 1373 (2001), encompassing a set of measures under Chapter VII of the Charter to enhance international cooperation in a vast array of areas, including measures aimed at rooting out the far-flung networks of support and financing used by terrorists.

We must spare no effort to ensure the full implementation of those resolutions, as well as to take any additional measures required by the General Assembly and the Security Council. Brazil will promptly take all necessary measures to comply fully with those provisions.

We must also reinforce our cooperative efforts at the regional level in the fight against terrorism. In the face of the aggression against the United States, Brazil supported the immediate convening of a ministerial meeting of the Organization of American States. Specific measures were then adopted to strengthen hemispheric cooperation in bringing perpetrators of terrorist acts to justice.

Additionally, Brazil took the initiative of invoking the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance. In recognition of the fact that the terrorist attacks suffered by the United States represent an attack on all American States, the mechanisms for mutual assistance were called into force. It was also decided, as a matter of urgency, that a draft inter-American convention against terrorism be submitted to the next General Assembly of the Organization of the American States.

This commitment to strengthening our collective security system in the face of terrorist threats builds on anti-terrorist measures adopted over the years at the regional and national levels. The Declaration and Plan of Action of Lima to Prevent, Combat and Eliminate Terrorism of 1996, as well as the Mar del Plata Commitment of 1998, laid the foundation for enhancing cooperation among the member states of the Organization of American States. At the subregional level, Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay have worked together effectively to integrate cross-border counter-terrorist police and intelligence activities.

Within the wider framework of measures adopted over the years by the United Nations, more specifically through General Assembly resolutions 49/60 and 51/210, we have created a network of interlocking conventions on judicial cooperation to ensure that the perpetrators of such crimes are held responsible. Brazil is taking measures to ensure that it is party to every one of these conventions.

Brazil welcomed the adoption of the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. It provides a novel and much needed approach in addressing the intricate financial schemes that support terrorist activities. The Convention also paves the way for concerted preventive action between law enforcement and financial authorities around the world. We also urge all delegations to decisively move ahead in the negotiation of a comprehensive convention against terrorism.

These initiatives give a clear picture of the significant ground already covered by the United Nations in the struggle against terrorism. Yet this is

still not enough. We must guarantee that such atrocities never happen again. And for that purpose, as the Secretary-General stressed yesterday, it is urgent that the United Nations develop a long-term strategy, in which every Member State will have a part to play.

This strategy must encompass actions on all fronts, from immediate repression to long-term prevention, including a comprehensive legal framework, as called for in General Assembly resolution 49/60. It must also rely heavily on the role of the Security Council in conflict resolution, as the sole international body entitled to authorize coercive actions.

The fight against terrorism will necessarily be a difficult, drawn-out battle that goes beyond the repression and prosecution of perpetrators. Repressive actions to crack down on terrorist cells are certainly necessary. In many instances, they are the only effective means immediately available to restore security and remove the imminent threat of terrorist strikes.

But the tragic events of 11 September highlight how essential preventive measures are in dealing with terrorist threats. Cooperative efforts must necessarily involve the sharing of information among intelligence agencies, strict border controls on suspected transactions, the dismantling of the financial network that supports terrorist activities, and enhanced security in transportation systems. The great strides in communications and transportation technology ushered in by globalization have made terrorist groups even more elusive, including in their links to other contemporary scourges, such as drug trafficking and the illicit trade in arms.

We must also find the cooperative ways to cope with the dramatic effects terrorist acts have on the economies of all countries, big or small, as we have witnessed in the past few weeks.

Terrorism will certainly fail and reason will undoubtedly prevail if we ensure that the foundations of international stability are based on tolerance, justice and the pursuit of prosperity and peace for all. As President Fernando Henrique Cardoso recently put it, we must ensure that globalization does not become a synonym for extreme inequalities, but rather a means to ensure greater participation for all.

Ultimately, security lies in building a better, more equitable world around us. A world in which we make full and effective use of the Charter instruments for conflict resolution and conflict prevention.

We fully agree with Secretary-General Kofi Annan that the United Nations is uniquely placed to face these challenges. It provides the forum for building a global coalition that can legitimately develop a long-term response to terrorism and its causes.

This debate offers an opportunity for the international community to demonstrate its resolve to defeat terrorism. It should draw on the vast experience and know-how of the several relevant United Nations organs and specialized agencies, as well as regional and other organizations directly involved at all levels.

The international community should come together at this time to solemnly undertake certain fundamental steps that would signal our resolve to deal decisively with the menace of terrorism. These might include the following: first, ensuring the universal adoption and full implementation of the existing counter-terrorism conventions; secondly, redoubling efforts to conclude negotiations on the draft comprehensive terrorism convention; thirdly, requesting the Secretary-General to prepare a report recommending measures to enhance the role of the United Nations, international agencies and regional organizations in combating terrorism; fourthly, adhering strictly to measures of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and, particularly, implementing fully those measures contained in the international conventions on chemical and biological weapons; fifthly, considering additional measures to enhance cooperation in such areas as border controls, financial institutions, information-sharing and law enforcement; and finally, ensuring that the international response to terrorism, in particular, when involving the use of force and the imposition of coercive measures, shall be guided by the principles set out in the Charter and in international law.

Mr. Ileka (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): I would like to add my voice to those of other speakers at this tribune to convey to you, Sir, my keen and heartfelt congratulations on the occasion of your election to the presidency of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly. I am convinced

that your wisdom, intellectual ability and diplomatic talents will see us through to a successful conclusion of this session tarnished by the terrible events of 11 September.

Allow me to express my regard for the merit of your predecessor, Mr. Harri Holkeri and congratulate him for the know-how and ability with which he carried out his difficult task during his presidency over the fifty-fifth General Assembly.

Finally, allow me to congratulate once more Mr. Kofi Annan for his outstanding re-election as Secretary-General and to convey to him the full support of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for the outstanding efforts he ceaselessly performs in the defence of human rights and the principles and goals of the United Nations Charter, and for his numerous and praiseworthy initiatives for peace and international security throughout the world, and in my country, in particular.

The present debate is additional proof, if such were necessary, that the tragedy of 11 September 2001, which has plunged the American Government and its people into mourning, does not affect Americans alone. The great number of victims of widely varying origins says much. There are also many among us whose relatives or friends were among the victims.

From the very first hours following the tragedy, His Excellency Major-General Joseph Kabila, President of the Republic, expressed the full sympathy and solidarity of the Congolese population for their good friends, the people of the United States of America. On that occasion, he asked that the perpetrators of that horrible crime be located, brought to justice and receive exemplary punishment.

We deplore the horrendous consequences of this tragedy, which had proved once again — as if there were any need to do so — that international terrorism is a matter of utmost seriousness and that joint action on the part of the entire international community and all peace-loving States is required in order to put an end to it.

My delegation believes that the participation of the entire international community in the struggle against this scourge depends on the commitment of all States to respect international conventions in this area, through adherence to these instruments and the taking of the necessary measures at the national level to ensure their full implementation.

Although the provisions of our penal code do not include a clear definition of terrorism, as is the case in a good number of countries, my country has always advocated a policy of prevention and suppression of international terrorism, at the domestic, regional and international levels. At the domestic level — and this has been the case since 21 February 1950 — the decree installing a regime for firearms and ammunition, as amended, subjects to the authorization of the President of the Republic the importing of firearms, their deposit in State armories and public storehouses, their withdrawal from these sites, and their transport, trafficking, possession, licensing, donation, abandonment and sale. Since that time, Congolese law has forbidden anyone who is not engaged in military service to possess firearms, in particular revolvers, pistols, submachine guns, rifles or any kind of automatic firearm capable of firing in bursts.

At the regional level, my country is party to the Organization of African Unity Convention of 14 July 1999 on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism. In its foreign policy, the Democratic Republic of the Congo understands that the use of force cannot settle the problems confronting the world today and that in the struggle against terrorism there is a need to create a universal conscience and a universal union that can eliminate this scourge and others that threaten the very survival of the human race.

It is for this reason that my country has signed and ratified several global conventions dealing with the question of international terrorism. These include the Tokyo Convention of 14 September 1963 on Offenses and Certain Other Acts Committed on Board Aircraft; the Hague Convention of 16 December 1970 for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft; the Montreal Convention of 23 September 1971 for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation; the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Crimes against Internationally Protected Persons, including Diplomatic Agents, adopted by the General Assembly on 14 December 1973; the International Convention against the Taking of Hostages, also adopted by the General Assembly on 17 December 1979; and the Montreal Protocol of 24 February 1988 for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts of Violence at Airports Serving International Civil Aviation, supplementary to the Convention for the

Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Civil Aviation.

Moreover, consultations are now under way for my country's accession to other relevant instruments to combat terrorism, including, inter alia, the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, adopted by the General Assembly on 15 December 1997, and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, adopted by the Assembly on 9 December 1999.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo has always advocated fighting terrorism in all of its aspects and manifestations. It therefore welcomes the adoption by the Security Council of resolution 1373 (2001) of 28 September 2001, which in our view is an important first step towards stemming and then eradicating this scourge. However, my delegation believes that a draft convention for the suppression of acts of terrorism would be of considerable assistance and would serve to supplement significantly the existing anti-terrorist conventions and serve as an effective legal framework to fight and deter acts of terrorism. It would be desirable for the delegations involved to moderate their positions so as to make it possible for the General Assembly to adopt this convention as quickly as possible.

My delegation also believes that the concept of terrorism must not be limited solely to acts carried out by individuals or isolated groups. It must cover a much broader concept that also includes large-scale organized acts that States use as a political instrument, the nature and consequences of which are extremely serious. It is this State terrorism, with incalculable consequences, that countries neighbouring ours, having crossed our borders in order to besiege the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in violation of the United Nations Charter, are now practising against the peaceful Congolese people with total impunity.

If the Congolese people and Government have hastened to demonstrate their solidarity with the friendly people of the United States following the 11 September tragedy, it is because the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its people have been living for more than three years now with armed aggression and the occupation of their territory by those neighbouring countries, and are therefore aware of the genuine meaning of the word "horror".

The manifestations of that daily horror are daily massacres of the civilian population, summary and extrajudicial executions, the deportation of entire populations, the taking of hostages, hijacking, the illegal capture and destruction of aircraft, the systematic rape and burying alive of women, destitution, other serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, the deliberate and criminal spread of HIV/AIDS, and so forth. Horror has therefore become a familiar phenomenon to the people of my country because of the regular armies of those neighbouring countries.

At the head of one of these aggressor terrorist and rogue States is an unbalanced individual who did not hesitate for one minute to commit his country to the path of State terrorism. This individual, who has continued to flout the entire Great Lakes region and the international community, bears primary responsibility for the death of millions of Congolese citizens. He is also at present the sole obstacle to the restoration of lasting peace and dignity to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. His hatred of the majority of his own fellow citizens does not allow him to see that the time is now right for the establishment and building of peace, justice and democracy in our region, for the benefit, of course, of the peoples who live there.

The events of 11 September must be of the greatest concern to us. At a time of such colossal suffering and grief we need more than ever to renew our dedication to the cause of peace. My delegation believes that it is called for to speed up and rapidly conclude the debate on the adoption of a universal definition of terrorism, as well as to draw up a detailed, comprehensive anti-terrorism convention. This idea has already received the unanimous backing of the member States of the Non-Aligned Movement, to which my country belongs, whose Twelfth Summit, held in Durban, South Africa, in 1998 reaffirmed the will of member States to refrain from organizing or facilitating acts of terrorism on the territory of other States or from participating in them. On the same occasion, the Summit unequivocally condemned all political, diplomatic, moral or material support for terrorism in all of its forms and aspects.

At its fifty-third session, the General Assembly decided to convene a high-level conference in the year 2000 to formulate an appropriate response on the part of the international community to the phenomenon of international terrorism and to all its forms and

manifestations. So far that dream has not been realized, and my delegation has good reason to believe that the time has finally come to give serious thought to this.

In conclusion, I would like to pay a stirring tribute to Mr. George Pataki and Mr. Rudolph Giuliani, respectively the Governor of New York State and the Mayor of New York City, as well as to the population of the city, for their outstanding and responsible actions in the face of this terrible ordeal they are enduring.

Mr. Loizaga (Paraguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the beginning of this session we welcomed the decision of the General Assembly to examine the item before us today and pledged our full and firm support so that our Organization might assume its rightful role, with a firm, vigorous and unequivocal stand with regard to taking all measures necessary to combat and eliminate terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, in accordance with the provisions of our Charter and norms of international law.

That decision of the Assembly resulted from the tragic events of 11 September, which cast into mourning not only the United States, but the entire civilized world, and affected the security of nations. Events of this nature are inconceivable and unjustifiable, and remind us of our vulnerability to individuals and groups of individuals that commit indiscriminate and barbaric acts of violence unthinkable for civilized human beings. These horrible acts, whose extremely grave consequences affected more than 80 nations, including Paraguay, which lost two of its nationals, have definitively changed the international context in which this new century is beginning. Therefore, the community of nations must assume the firmest commitment and resolve for international peace and security.

It would be difficult to forget the moments of pain, powerlessness and grief of millions of persons throughout the world, of the families of the victims and of those who heroically lost their lives saving others, whose distressing images were seen the world over and are still very much on our minds.

The President of the Republic of Paraguay, Luis Ángel González Macchi, expressed on behalf of the Government and people of my country, as soon as the events became known, condemnation of and outrage at the tragedy. He also expressed solidarity with the people and the Government of the United States of America and the families of the victims. He pledged the complete and resolute support of the Government of Paraguay for the United States Government in all its efforts to identify and bring to justice the perpetrators, as well as those who provide shelter to and support these criminals. These acts are intolerable in the building of an international order based on the principles of justice, international law and human rights. This is the opinion of the Government of Paraguay. Thus we are not neutral, nor shall we be ambiguous in the face of such a cowardly crime that took so many innocent lives. We shall continue to support all the efforts of this Organization and the international community to root out these criminal practices.

On 23 September the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Paraguay, José Antonio Moreno Ruffinelli, went from Washington to New York to see what remained after the brutal attack on the World Trade Center and, as one more citizen, to express his solidarity with New York and the victims of this terrible tragedy.

As soon as the events occurred, the Government of the Republic of Paraguay adopted internal measures for greater control and security regarding entry to and departure from our territory and for a broader exchange of information and greater coordination between the various Government departments, within the norms of our domestic law and those of freedom of movement.

In the framework of the judiciary, under the auspices of the Supreme Court of Justice, in close cooperation with the interior ministry, we are preparing and studying a preliminary draft of a law to include in penal legislation the definition of the crime of terrorism.

In the regional framework, Paraguay had the honour of presenting to the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States (OAS) the resolution, agreed by consensus by the 34 members, convening the Twenty-third Meeting of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the hemisphere, with a view to urgent consideration of this subject within the OAS.

Paraguay also supported Brazil's timely initiative to request the convening of the consultative body of the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, a collective-defence mechanism of the American countries. It was agreed there that terrorist attacks against the United States of America are considered to be attacks against all the States of the hemisphere and

that therefore effective reciprocal assistance must be provided in order to counter such attacks.

In the subregional context, my country requested the convening on 28 September of the Interior Ministers of the countries of the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR) — Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay — to undertake the broadest possible cooperation among ourselves and with other countries for an exchange of information, studies and actions against terrorist activities; establish a standing working group to evaluate joint and coordinated action against terrorism; and consider action to be included in the regional security plan, in accordance with the resolution adopted by the Ministers of the Interior. The associated MERCOSUR countries of Bolivia and Chile were also invited to participate in this work.

Since the twenty-seventh session of the General Assembly, in 1972, the item on measures to eliminate international terrorism has constantly, but timidly, been on our Organization's agenda. Various factors, including ideological ones that prevailed during the cold war, obstructed decision-taking and valid measures against the unjustifiable practices of terrorism. We have had to experience the tragedy that we witnessed first-hand to mobilize a consensus on the urgent need to have a rapid and perhaps drastic response to these types of criminal acts. The damage is measured not only in the loss of thousands of lives and major losses to the international economy and finance. In addition — and this, too, is a serious matter — through the technology of the communications media, which showed the entire world live and direct the distressing images from New York, Washington and Pennsylvania, an entire generation of children and adolescents has been marked by fear and insecurity; unable to find reasons, they ask themselves why these inhuman acts occurred and what kind of future awaits them.

Our Organization cannot wait another 30 years to find an answer to how to confront and eradicate terrorism. It must also make every effort to take effective collective action to prevent and eradicate threats to peace, as called for by the Charter.

The United Nations, through the resolutions adopted on 12 September by the Security Council and the General Assembly, has reacted rapidly and unanimously with expressions of unequivocal condemnation of the events of 11 September, and has thus given clear evidence of its determination to begin the fight against this terrible evil. Last Friday the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1373 (2001), which undoubtedly marks a new stage in the Council's work, which, in fulfilment of the responsibilities given to it by our Charter, shows its firm resolve to contribute to the eradication of acts such as those committed on 11 September, that constitute a threat to international peace and security. The resolution binds all States to unite and act jointly to combat all means of terrorism, the perpetrators, their accomplices and those who harbour them. In this respect, Paraguay is determined to act in accordance with the above-mentioned resolution and, in keeping with the principles and norms of international law and its own internal law, to adopt measures and take actions that are necessary for the effective implementation of that resolution.

In the current circumstances, it is imperative that an international legal framework function effectively in order to prevent and respond to terrorist and criminal acts efficiently and rapidly. In this respect, we have a basis of international conventions on the subject adopted under the auspices of our Organization.

The Government of the Republic of Paraguay has authorized me to sign, in the coming days, the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, adopted by this Assembly in 1999, which, once adopted by our Congress, will be part of internal law in my country. Furthermore, my delegation considers that progress must be made to conclude the two conventions that are now under discussion in the Sixth Committee: the comprehensive convention on terrorism, submitted by the delegation of India, and the draft convention on nuclear terrorism, an initiative of the Russian Federation. Any time that we may lose in the strengthening of our legal framework will be an opportunity for terrorists to increase their own power.

The fight against terrorism requires protracted and concerted efforts by the United Nations and the international community, just as it necessitates strengthening and deepening international cooperation at every level. In this respect, we appeal to the developed countries to give those States that so request the needed assistance in technology and training and financial assistance in order to help them increase their anti-terrorist capacities. Likewise, my delegation believes it to be of fundamental importance to give the

relevant units of the Secretariat the resources needed in order to strengthen and enhance their capacity to collect and analyse information; it is equally important to give help to those countries that need cooperation — in particular, in order to implement the recently adopted resolution 1373 (2001) of the Security Council.

In conclusion, this General Assembly, the universal organ of the United Nations, must take the political decision to act collectively, effectively and concretely in the face of the current circumstances, and assume its responsibility in the fight against terrorism in all its manifestations. The discussion on the issue that is before us today must be a first step in that direction. At this session the Assembly must go beyond mere statements of condemnation and solidarity. We must pledge today — in a joint, coordinated and concerted way, and for the medium and long term — as is expected of this Organization, to fulfil our moral, legal and political obligation to construct, for ourselves and for future generations, a legacy of democracy, freedom, peace and security.

Miss Durrant (Jamaica): The course of human history was altered on 11 September when the world was shocked into disbelief at the despicable acts of terrorism perpetrated in New York, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania. This was an attack not only against the United States but against all of humanity. Jamaica condemns all acts of terrorism. We condemn those who carry out such acts and those who provide terrorists with support of any kind. My country, like many others in this Hall, suffered the loss of lives of our citizens, and we all grieve together. All acts of terrorism are criminal and are contrary to societal norms. No just cause can be served by acts of terrorism.

Since 11 September, the international community has focused on the many challenges we face in dealing with this scourge of the society of nations. So far, our actions have been resolute and unequivocal, but we have only just begun. We have taken only the first steps, albeit important ones. The true test will be the level of effectiveness achieved in implementing the decisions we have already taken and those to come.

On Friday last, the Security Council adopted resolution 1373 (2001), reaffirming the will of the international community to rid the world of terrorism and, in so doing, to establish a legal framework for action by Member States. This decisive action by the Security Council followed that taken on 12 September by the Security Council as well as by the General Assembly, whereby we declared our intentions to work together to put an end to the scourge of international terrorism, which threatens international peace and security. Terrorism threatens us all, and as recent events have demonstrated, no member of the international community is far removed from its effects. It also confirmed our belief that international terrorism can be defeated only if we work together, in a collective effort, to eliminate the sources of support for terrorists.

We believe that it is imperative for all nations and all peoples of the world to join in a concerted and unremitting course of action, or series of actions, to defeat terrorism. We must reconfirm our commitment to ensure that those who carry out or support terrorist acts are once and for all brought to account. There must be no refuge or safe haven for terrorists and those who support, aid or abet them.

We must be guided by the principle established by the General Assembly in its resolution 2625 (XXV) of October 1970, which bears repeating:

> "Every State has the duty to refrain from organizing, instigating, assisting or participating in ... terrorist acts in another State or acquiescing in organized activities within its territory directed towards the commission of such acts".

This is an affirmation of good-neighbourliness and comity among nations. These are our basic obligations if we are to ensure that the rule of law and justice prevails throughout the global community.

Jamaica has stated in the past, and reiterates today, that the most effective response to these heinous acts continues to be full cooperation at the international level. It is in this context that we fully support the development of a comprehensive and effective legal framework to combat terrorism. This includes the work being undertaken by the Ad Hoc Committee on terrorism to draft a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. Such a universally accepted legal framework will provide for the level of cooperation and coordination recognized as essential for effective action by Member States. We urge the Committee to move quickly to decide on the major outstanding issues so that action on the convention may be taken by the General Assembly at this session.

There are already a number of international conventions that provide a basis for concerted action against terrorism. Taken together, those legal instruments provide a foundation for addressing terrorism through appropriate cooperation and information exchange. Jamaica is undertaking a review of those conventions with a view to signing and, where appropriate, ratifying and fully implementing those not already in effect in our country. We urge all Member States to do likewise.

In the meantime, there are a number of important steps we can take to combat terrorism and the supporters of terrorism. Globalization and the revolution in communications technology, which now define much of our lives, have presented us with new challenges in the fight against terrorism. In that context, last week Jamaica, along with a number of countries from the Caribbean Community, signed the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

Transnational organized crime, which manifests itself in several forms of criminal activity — including illicit narcotics production and trafficking, money laundering and illegal arms transfers — has taken advantage of advances in technology to broaden its reach across international boundaries. The international community must also take advantage of technological advances and available expertise to wage our battle against terrorism. In advancing our cause, those who have the know-how must be prepared to share it with those who lack it. To that end, our focus must take into consideration all aspects of terrorism and effectively deal with all instruments at the disposal of terrorists.

In any consideration of terrorism particular attention must be paid to efforts aimed at countering the traffic in small arms and light weapons, which undoubtedly contribute to the spread and escalation of terrorism. The international community must move forward in concert on this most important issue.

There are a number of immediate actions required of us as Member States. We must take action to prevent and suppress the financing of terrorists. We must remove their ability to move funds across borders to facilitate their activities and to traverse the globe with such ease. We must deny access to funds used by terrorists and their supporters without delay. We must refrain from providing any form of support at the State, group or individual level. We must eliminate all safe havens for terrorists and their supporters. We must share vital information necessary to work effectively in a coordinated and cooperative international effort to combat terrorism. We must serve the cause of justice by eliminating impunity for all terrorist acts, utilizing all lawful means at our disposal. We must always be mindful of the fact that terrorism largely visits suffering upon innocent civilians — including women and children, who are often killed, maimed or orphaned as a result, thereby causing humanitarian tragedies.

The international community must now act resolutely and deliberately to secure a safe world for ourselves and for the generations to come. We must act in step with each other, and together as the community of nations, in carrying out the decisions we take in the United Nations. We must assert and support the leadership role of the Organization in the fight against international terrorism. The Security Council has begun the work necessary for effective action; the General Assembly must act likewise. Let us go forward from this Hall united in our determination. Let us reaffirm our collective will and let our actions in pursuit of this cause surpass our words.

In conclusion, I wish to associate the Jamaican delegation with the statement that will be delivered later in this debate on behalf of the Caribbean Community.

Ms. Rasi (Finland): I wish to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election to preside over this session of the General Assembly. You have the full support of the delegation of Finland in your very demanding work.

Finland fully subscribes to the statement made on behalf of the European Union by the representative of Belgium, Mr. Jean de Ruyt, as well as to the conclusions and the plan of action adopted by the European Council at its extraordinary meeting in Brussels on 21 September.

We condemn unequivocally the terrorist attacks in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania, and we express our solidarity with the United States. I also wish to express my Government's deep sympathy and sincere condolences to the victims and their families, as well as to the people and Government of the United States. The horrendous events of 11 September have profoundly shocked all nations, big and small.

While those events were unprecedented and unimaginable in many respects, they also share a number of common traits with other terrorist attacks in recent years. One such trend is the increasing lethality of the attacks. Their anonymity is another new phenomenon, as those who commit such acts rely on networks of undetermined groups and organizations. The lack of discernible organizational structures and political programmes makes those groups and organizations invisible adversaries. The first, and by no means the easiest, challenge for counter-terrorism is often that of identifying and locating the adversary.

Any Government's ability to craft an effective response to terrorist attacks will, in those circumstances, depend on international support, coordination and cooperation. The European Union has called for the broadest possible global coalition against terrorism and has rightly emphasized the primordial role of the United Nations in that respect. Terrorist acts constitute a threat to international peace and security. The resolutions and statements of the Security Council, in particular last Friday's resolution 1373 (2001), send a powerful message that terrorism must be combated decisively.

The General Assembly of the United Nations has done important and indispensable work in recent years to build a consensus on the basic principle that terrorist acts, wherever and by whomever they are committed, are criminal and unjustifiable by any political, religious or philosophical considerations. Terrorism may grow out of inequality and oppression, but such circumstances do not justify terrorist acts. There is no just terrorism, whatever the causes. At the same time, understanding and eradicating the underlying causes of terrorism pose a challenge to societies and to the international community.

While terrorist organizations increasingly seek their inspiration in different religions, it is clear that no religion can condone terrorism. The European Union has categorically rejected any equation of groups of fanatical terrorism with the Arab and Muslim world. Acts of terrorism pose a serious challenge to States and Governments all over the world. It is the global reach of the problem that makes it necessary for the international community to respond to it in a coordinated manner.

While no category of response which is in accordance with international law can be excluded, efforts to suppress terrorism must always respect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The 12 conventions elaborated under United Nations auspices to prevent and suppress terrorist acts provide an essential framework for the fight against terrorism. We join the call upon all countries to sign and ratify and to fully implement those conventions. Finland has signed all 12 conventions and will soon have ratified 10 of them. The internal preparations required for the ratification of the two most recent conventions will be carried out as a matter of priority.

The 1997 International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings covers all attacks by means of explosive or other lethal devices, including radioactive materials and chemical or biological agents and toxins directed against government or infrastructure facilities, public transportation systems or places of public use. It is a particularly effective instrument which expands the legal basis for international cooperation in the investigation, prosecution and extradition of persons who engage in terrorist crimes.

Organizing the attacks of 11 September would not have been possible without established transnational networks of support and funding. As a matter of fact, most terrorist crimes would not be possible without financial resources from supporters. The 1999 International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism acknowledges that those who finance terrorist crimes are equally responsible and should be treated as severely as those who commit the crimes. The Convention applies to the wilful collection or provision of funds, legally or illegally, with the intention, or in the knowledge, that they are to be used for terrorist acts. Once in force and fully implemented, that Convention will significantly improve the ability of Governments to work together to reduce the threat of terrorism.

Even though the scope of the existing conventions is fairly comprehensive, there are still gaps to be filled. The discussions on a comprehensive convention on international terrorism, on the basis of a draft text submitted by India, are under way in the Sixth Committee. Such a convention would strengthen the comprehensive network of conventions and would enhance the impact of the measures taken in the United Nations over the past quarter of a century. All efforts should be concentrated on the upcoming third round of

negotiations on finding solutions that will make the convention generally acceptable. The draft convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism should also be completed as soon as possible.

The few weeks since 11 September have seen a unanimous condemnation of the terrorist attacks as a violation of the fundamental values of the United Nations. Success in the fight against terrorism will to a large extent depend on continued and continually strengthened international cooperation. A whole array of different means — legal, law enforcement and diplomatic — will be needed, along with close and effective cooperation at practical levels.

Finland unequivocally condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. We will participate both nationally and as a member of the European Union in formulating and implementing a coordinated and coherent response to the threat of terrorism.

The President: I assure the representative of Finland that, in discharging my responsibilities as President, I shall do my best to follow the tradition set by her compatriot, His Excellency Mr. Harri Holkeri.

Mr. Aboud (Comoros) (*spoke in Arabic*): It is written in the Holy Koran,

> "Ye are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah." (*III:110*)

(*spoke in English*)

At the outset, my delegation would like to associate itself with the statement made yesterday by the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya on behalf of the Arab Group. And, since my country is the victim of occupation, my delegation fully supports what he said in that connection, that

> "we maintain that foreign occupation is the greatest enemy of freedom — the freedom of countries, peoples, territories and humankind." (*A/56/PV.14*)

(*spoke in French*)

I wish, on behalf of the people and the Government of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros, to convey heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims of the 11 September attacks and to the people and the Government of the United States. Through our head of State, Colonel Azali Assoumani, the Government of the Comoros has condemned those attacks on human dignity, and we do so again today.

On behalf of my delegation, and on my own account, I wish to say how delighted we are, Sir, to see you presiding over the work of the General Assembly. The highest authorities of my country will congratulate you on your election in the course of the forthcoming general debate. Now, let me reaffirm my delegation's confidence and support as you work to discharge your responsibilities as President.

The work of the Organization has been seriously disturbed in many respects. But, more than our work, it is our hearts that have been profoundly touched. In our dignity and our humanity, we have all been shaken by the sad events of 11 September. The inhuman acts of rare barbarity that struck New York and other places were intended to harm all of humankind.

At the Millennium Summit, held last year in this very Hall, our heads of State or Government evoked the true cause of the terrorism that threatens democracy and freedom in all our countries. They concluded that it was necessary to eradicate it by all means possible. Here, the Government of the Comoros is pleased at the determination shown by the Security Council. We unreservedly endorse the Council's support for the struggle against terrorism, and in particular last week's Security Council resolution 1373 (1201), which clearly and unequivocally condemns all acts, methods, financing and practices of terrorism, and which highlights the need for the international community effectively and efficiently to respond to terrorism.

Of course, to combat the globalization of terrorism — a scourge that transcends the geographical borders of our countries and that crosses all lines of religion and custom — only international cooperation and solidarity can ensure the success of this vast enterprise. My Government believes that, in order to effectively combat this scourge, which threatens our cultures and our societies, integrated coordination on the part of our States and, more specifically, within the framework of our universal Organization, is the most effective and reliable course ahead.

My Government urgently calls for cooperation on the part of the international community in order effectively to fight terrorism in all its forms. Only international determination, in the context of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, will make it possible to put an end to these heinous acts. Indeed,

terrorism spares no region of the world and no sector of society.

The Government of Comoros believes that we must urgently consider taking objective and concrete action aimed at combating the evil of terrorism by tackling its very roots. Regrettably, terrorism is not a new phenomenon, but, in the conflagration of 11 September, it reached proportions that are beyond comprehension.

The search for adequate, global and lasting solutions must become a priority in the struggle that has now begun against this evil. Towards that end, my delegation endorses the statement made by Secretary-General Kofi Annan at the opening of the fifty-sixth session:

> "No effort should be spared in bringing the perpetrators to justice in a clear and transparent process". *(A/56/PV.7)*

The clear, comprehensive and concise report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization, which warrants our full attention, should continue to serve as a crucial tool that will help guide our thinking and rationally direct our future work. My delegation supports the broad lines underlying that document, and we are glad to welcome and vigorously support the wise proposals of the Secretary-General.

The same concerns as in the past, unfortunately, are part of the picture. Conflicts seem to persist in many regions. We recall the wisdom that prevailed at the Millennium Summit, during which it was stated that peace and international security could never be dissociated from the underdevelopment that prevails in many of our countries.

The conflicts in these countries stem from diverse causes that are related, to varying degrees, to problems of underdevelopment. This means that we need a multifaceted response and that we must propose global and concrete action.

The need to intensify multifaceted international cooperation is clear. We must meet the challenges posed by the need to strengthen national and regional capacities for sustainable human development.

The report of the United Nations Development Programme this year shows that we are still far from meeting our objectives, even though the eradication of poverty by the year 2015 remains one of our priorities. Poverty, AIDS, problems related to public health, climate change and the damage done to our environment, problems related to education and to the rights of the child, and terrorism — all of these questions deserve our particular attention and adequate responses. To this end, cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations must be as broad-based and intensive as possible.

We must extend, through concrete and consistent operations, the multifaceted presence of the international community in countries that have already begun the process of détente, are seeing an improvement in their situations and have already started out on the road of peace and reconciliation, in particular Sierra Leone, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Macedonia, and, to a lesser extent, the Comoros and its Fomboni reconciliation process.

My country, the Comoros, has been the victim in recent years of continuing interference, through European mercenaries, that has led to the successive assassinations of two heads of State. Another one was deposed, and yet another was deported to an island in the Indian Ocean. Not only that, but now we are plagued by the evil of separatism. Nonetheless, we are prepared to move forward.

Let us encourage all of those countries, as well as the Middle East peace process, to move ahead with strict respect for the Charter of the United Nations and the resolutions of the Security Council.

On behalf of my delegation, I should like to emphasize once again that my country is committed to the fight against terrorism and will continue to combat it firmly, with strict respect for the principles of international law. We are prepared to support all regional and international initiatives to develop cooperation and coordination aimed at combating and eliminating terrorism in all its forms.

In this context, my Government has taken national measures, and it has also signed and ratified instruments for the struggle against terrorism — instruments prepared, inter alia, by the League of Arab States, the Organization of African Unity, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the United Nations.

My delegation has always been in favour of equitable international justice. In this respect, we are

now participating in the discussions of the eighth session of the Preparatory Commission for the International Criminal Court, and we have pledged, after having signed it, to ratify the Rome Statute in the near future.

Once again the Government of the Comoros condemns in the most forceful terms terrorism in all of its forms. We express our horror at such acts, which indiscriminately kill innocent civilians.

My delegation reiterates its support for the Secretary-General. We encourage him to pursue relentlessly his fight for a world of peace and tolerance, and we invite all delegations of fraternal and friendly countries to work together in their common aspiration to maintain peace and international security, with respect for the principles of human rights, democratic freedoms and good governance, in order to achieve harmony in the world and in the best interests of human civilization.

Mr. De Rivero (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): I cannot begin my statement without expressing the outrage of the Peruvian Government and people at the barbaric attack that we witnessed last 11 September. That attack was conceived in such a machiavellian and cruel fashion as to take the largest possible number of human lives and cause the greatest physical damage possible.

Peru, which has lost more than 25,000 human lives and valuable material resources to terrorism, and the many other countries that are also victims of this scourge feel, as if it were their own, the pain, helplessness and the indignation experienced by a nation when it is attacked in such an infamous manner by a faceless enemy. We therefore extend our solidarity and our sincerest condolences to the people and authorities of the United States, and we wish them strength and wisdom in overcoming these difficult times.

While globalization has brought undeniable benefits and advantages, it has also spread throughout the world problems that once affected only certain countries or regions. It is clear that the same thing has happened as concerns the phenomenon of terrorism; it has become globalized. Today, no country can be immune to the devastating effects of terrorism.

But we must understand terrorism. It is a complex phenomenon. Fanaticism is often intimately related to drug trafficking and common crime. We often cannot tell where crime begins and terrorism ends. This is a new, difficult struggle that requires innovative and sophisticated methods. It can never, ever be won by military force. It can be won by intelligence and by an alliance of the majority of citizens who seek to lead a safe and decent life.

Terrorism is the main violator of human rights and constitutes a crime against humanity. Its bloody practices, its innocent, random victims and its disdain for human life make it entirely condemnable. Any cause that might be invoked to justify a terrorist act loses its legitimacy forever because of the inhuman methods and nature.

The item of terrorism within the United Nations was added to the General Assembly's agenda in 1972. Since then, this subject has been discussed in this Organization on two basic levels. First, various resolutions of political condemnation of terrorism have been adopted and, secondly, attempts have been made to establish a balanced legal framework to prevent manifestations of terrorism, punish those responsible and reinforce international cooperation.

Although 12 conventions have been adopted within this Organization against different aspects of terrorism, we note with concern that the number of States parties to those conventions is far from representing the broad consensus that supports the political messages rejecting and condemning this scourge. It is indispensable that, in the struggle against terrorism, the political discourse be reified within an appropriate legal framework. In this respect, special mention should be made of the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, which seeks to combat terrorist activities in their most sensitive aspect: the supply, collection and transfer of funds to support them. We hope that the provisions of that Convention will enter into force as soon as possible.

The conventions that are still being negotiated within the Ad Hoc Committee established by resolution 51/210 — the draft convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism and the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism — must be concluded soon in order to send a clear message of the shared resolve to defeat terrorism. Any delay in their adoption might send the wrong message of the international community's weakness or lack of unity.

In designing the global legal framework against terrorism, the complexity and scope of the definition of terrorism should not and must not hinder the international community's adoption of urgent, practical and effective measures to prevent and punish acts of terrorism and to establish appropriate punishment for their perpetrators. Among these urgent, practical measures in the struggle against terrorism, extradition must be compulsory to facilitate the prosecution of those who commit terrorist acts and of those who seek refuge or protection in other countries.

My Government welcomes the recent approval by the Security Council of resolution 1373 (2001), which establishes a Committee to oversee a number of necessary practical and effective measures with a view to the elimination of terrorism. In the near future, my Government will also report to that Committee on the measures it has taken and will take in the struggle against terrorism. We assure the Committee of our full cooperation.

In this struggle, possibly more than in any other, the States need each other because of the unsuspected magnitude of the networks for the preparation, supply, financing and sheltering of terrorist groups. In this scenario, international cooperation in intelligence, police work, legal practice, the regulation of financial transfers and extradition, inter alia, becomes simply indispensable. It is indispensable, but it is not enough. As Secretary-General Kofi Annan affirmed recently, the only way to face this common enemy is through cooperation and partnership among all the social forces of a nation: the State; the private sector, including banks and financial institutions; the academic sector, with its research capacities; and civil society, with its advocacy of human rights in all forms.

The struggle that Peru waged against terrorism in the past would have been easier and would have claimed many fewer human lives had the international community understood at that time the urgent need for that partnership. In spite of this, we managed to overcome terrorism and we are willing to place our own experience at the service of the international community.

Terrorism so affected my own country that Peru convened the First Inter-American Specialized Conference On Terrorism in 1996. It culminated in the adoption of a Declaration in which the members of the Organization of American States reiterated their most forceful condemnation of all terrorist methods and acts; wherever they are committed, whomever may be their agents and whatever the methods and motivation with which they attempt to justify them. At the same time, and in accordance with that Declaration, a Plan of Action to prevent, fight and eliminate terrorism was approved, serving as the basis for the subsequent establishment of an Inter-American Committee on Terrorism at the Second Inter-American Conference on the subject held in Mar del Plata, Argentina, in November 1998.

Recently, at the twenty-third Meeting of Consultation of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Assembly of American States held in Washington, D.C., on 19 September, a resolution was adopted that, in addition to forcefully rejecting terrorism, proposed practical measures to eradicate it. It notes that the struggle against terrorism must be conducted — and this is important — in full respect for the law, human rights and democratic institutions in order to preserve the rule of law and democratic values and freedoms. At that time, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Peru proposed the elaboration of an inter-American convention against terrorism, which should contain clear obligations with regard to cooperation in the exchange of information and in the prosecution, extradition, judging and punishment of those involved in terrorist acts. Peru will continue to coordinate action at the inter-American level to make this convention against terrorism a reality as soon as possible.

Peru has shown its commitment to the struggle against terrorism by recently undertaking a number of international measures in this respect, including signing the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism; acceding to the Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf; acceding to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation; and acceding to the International Convention against the Taking of Hostages.

Furthermore, the parliament of Peru is in the process of considering draft legislation to accede to the 1997 International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and to ratify the 1999 International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism.

Peru has always been involved in the fight against terrorism; we have suffered from terrorism and we have overcome it. That is why we are ready to engage in intensive international cooperation to prevent acts of terror and punish the terrorists.

Mr. Widodo (Indonesia): My delegation deems the convening of the General Assembly to debate this issue to be both timely and appropriate, given the tragic sequence of events on 11 September in New York, Washington D.C. and Pennsylvania. Even today, more than three weeks later, the enormity and gravity of that carnage is still becoming clear. Indonesia, together with the rest of the international community, was shocked to hear that a great number of innocent people of many nationalities lost their lives or were wounded.

Let me therefore take this opportunity to reiterate once again the deepest sympathy of my Government and of the Indonesian people to the Government and the people of the United States and to the other countries directly affected, especially to the bereaved families, in their hour of grief. Acts of terrorism such as these can never be justified, regardless of their objectives; they violate the sanctity of human life and run counter to the basic tenets of all cultures and religious faiths.

Indonesia has in the past condemned all acts of terrorism, in line with its consistent position that such indiscriminate violence can never be allowed to subjugate the rule of law. As we are all aware, the scourge of terrorism is by no means a new form of illegal action. From the dawn of history, terrorism has afflicted many nations and societies, having a severe impact on their economic and social development. In our contemporary world, with all its complexities, terrorism has become an intolerable menace, endangering peace, stability and harmonious coexistence among States. Consequently, there is an urgent need to mount a universal response within a framework of concerted cooperation to rid our societies of this dangerous phenomenon.

The solemnity of the current deliberations reflects our profound concern that acts of terrorism, with their horrendous toll in human lives and material devastation, are tearing at the very fabric of civilized societies. They are incompatible with the principles of the United Nations Charter. Indeed, they go against the very raison d'etre of this Organization, whose goal is to achieve peace, development and the rule of law; freedom, justice and independence for all peoples; human rights, democratic values, good governance and tolerance; and understanding and cooperation among members of the international community, regardless of race, religion or creed. These are the goals that all nations strive for and are committed to fostering.

As President Megawati Soekarnoputri has stated, the recent tragedies underline the importance of international cooperation in eradicating terrorism anywhere in the world. Indonesia stands ready to cooperate. It is in this context that the United Nations, as the only multilateral organization with universal membership, is uniquely placed to advance global efforts and to take necessary and effective measures to combat this alarming increase in terrorist activity. It is the only appropriate forum to accord legitimacy to undertaking the resolute action needed to eradicate this phenomenon. Our approach should, however, be based on justice and fairness, rather than coercion and prejudice. We should guard against hasty decisions, which may prove to be counter-productive. As this is a global problem requiring a global response, the United Nations can also reconcile disparate views and thereby harmonize efforts in a spirit of cooperation and partnership.

At the same time, it is important to underscore that terrorism consists simply of indiscriminate acts of violence aimed at the civilized world, and that attempts to depict it as a conflict between the West and the Islamic world are patently misleading and absolutely wrong. For Islam is a religion of peace that neither teaches nor condones violence. Indonesia has itself experienced acts of terrorism emanating from separatists and extremist movements. This is incompatible with our cherished objectives of national unity and with the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Indonesian nation.

In the past, there has been strong evidence that threats and acts of terrorism may either originate from inside the borders of the country affected or be cross-border in nature. Hence, national efforts will not suffice unless they are accompanied by regional endeavours. This is the principal reason why President Megawati Soekarnoputri recently visited neighbouring countries in the Association of South-East Asian Nations to strengthen a regional approach. Such an approach has become crucial to eliminating international terrorism, which has often been found to have close links to other transnational crimes, such as

those of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, money laundering and the trafficking of illegal aliens.

In the same vein, Indonesia considers international cooperation to be imperative. This should include the exchange of information and the training of personnel to deal with transnational crime, with a view to augmenting capacity and institution-building and formulating legal mechanisms and instruments. At the present time, my Government is in the process of building upon, or has already established, such forms of cooperation with a number of countries. In this regard, Indonesia fully associates itself with the commitments of the Non-Aligned Movement, as contained in the Durban Declaration of 1998, which underlined the need to adopt a collective position in accordance with the principles of international law as well as respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States. Moreover, it is the view of Indonesia that it is incumbent upon the Sixth Committee to conclude its discussion on a comprehensive convention on international terrorism on the basis of a draft submitted by India.

It is pertinent to recall that both the General Assembly and the Security Council adopted resolutions on 12 September 2001 that, among other actions, called on Member States to redouble their efforts to prevent and suppress terrorist acts, including by increasing cooperation and by bringing to justice the perpetrators, organizers and sponsors of the recent attacks. Furthermore, on 28 September 2001, the Security Council, in its resolution 1373 (2001), inter alia, called on all States to prevent and suppress the financing of terrorist acts by taking certain measures, including freezing without delay funds and other assets used to commit terrorism, calling on them as well to accede to relevant conventions, such as the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism.

My delegation would also like to recall that only last year the Millennium Declaration urged the Member States to take concrete action against international terrorism and to accede as soon as possible to all relevant conventions. Indonesia, for its part, is already in the process of ratifying relevant treaties. On 24 September 2001, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia signed the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism of 1999.

In conclusion, as we are painfully aware, terrorism has taken a deadly and unconscionable toll and threatens to undermine regional peace, global security and sustainable development. We are therefore duty-bound to eradicate this scourge once and forever. My delegation remains hopeful that, together with multilateral, regional and other cooperative efforts, including the participation of civil society, we will make significant contributions to rendering our world a safer and more secure place.

Mr. Wehbe (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. President, it is a pleasure for me to congratulate you on your election as President of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly. I am convinced that your previous posts in your country and the respect you enjoy will facilitate your task of guiding the work of this session to the desired success.

My delegation also has the pleasure of associating itself with the statement made by the permanent representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya yesterday on behalf of the Arab group.

We meet here today at the United Nations, in New York City, a city in mourning, which, several days ago, suffered devastating terrorist attacks claiming thousands of innocent civilians.

The Syrian Arab Republic has vigorously condemned this odious crime committed against mankind. The President of the Syrian Arab Republic, Mr. Bashar Al-Assad, moreover, sent a letter of condolences to the President of the United States, George Bush, emphasizing his complete condemnation and firm denunciation of this series of terrorist attacks, which shocked the world by their barbarism, their contempt for human life and property, and their incompatibility with all religious, spiritual and human values. The attacks targeted innocent civilians and deprived them of their most fundamental right, the right to a peaceful and safe life. These attacks struck at the nerve centres of the United States and subjected them to massive destruction.

The President of my country asked President Bush and the entire world to lay down solid foundations for international cooperation with the objective of acting together to avoid a repetition of the events seen here and throughout the world. He asked him to work together in a spirit of genuine cooperation to eliminate terrorism wherever it may be and in all of its forms and manifestations.

International terrorism is nothing new. The attacks against New York, Washington, D.C. and Pennsylvania are not the first of their kind. But, they were genuinely devastating in their scope and impact, in both their human and material aspect. Their disastrous consequences, in fact, have awakened the international community to the need to put an end to this scourge.

For many years, my country, Syria, as well as numerous Arab and other countries, has been subjected to terrorism. We have called on the international community to condemn all forms of terrorism and, in particular, State terrorism.

Today, the entire truth needs to be told to this Assembly. Indeed, we cannot find a real remedy to the scourge of terrorism without revealing all the facts to the international community. We would like to emphasize here that international cooperation to combat terrorism has been insufficient. Many countries have not fulfilled their international legal obligations in combating terrorism. In this respect, the Syrian Arab Republic has played a leading role by proposing initiatives to fight terrorism. In fact, the late President Hafiz Al-Assad, in his concern to assure international cooperation, had as far back as 1986 proposed the holding of an international conference to define terrorism in order to distinguish it from the just and legitimate struggle of peoples fighting for independence and liberation. This is exactly what we are seeking today.

The General Assembly considered that proposal then. All the summits of the Non-Aligned Movement, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, and governmental and non-governmental bodies endorsed the initiative.

Unfortunately, we have let a golden opportunity slip by. Once and for all, we can now take advantage of this appeal in order to launch an unflagging war against terrorism, which has stricken New York, Washington and Pennsylvania, as well as cities in Africa, Europe and Latin America.

I would like to emphasize that the Arab countries have also made tireless efforts to combat the scourge of terrorism. Those efforts are reflected in the conclusion of a regional Arab Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism, the Convention of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) on Combating International Terrorism and all the continued appeals made by Arab leaders to fight this serious scourge.

Syria has always reaffirmed the need to act on all levels to combat international terrorism, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. We have also called previously upon all States to adopt the national, regional and international legal measures required to combat and eliminate the scourge, and to implement the norms of international law and relevant international resolutions concerning the suppression of terrorist acts, their financing, their instigation, complicity in or tolerance of such acts and protection of the perpetrators. We also wish to emphasize that in 1952 Syria was among the first States to adopt strict measures within its own domestic legislation to combat terrorism. We have also signed numerous conventions with many States to combat transnational crime and to coordinate joint action in combating terrorism, illicit drug-trafficking and money-laundering.

Syria would like to reaffirm the right of the United States, within the framework of the United Nations, to pursue and bring to justice the perpetrators of these terrorist acts, and to do so through the various competent commissions and bodies, as well as to adopt carefully calculated measures to combat terrorism. However, any action to this end must be accompanied by irrefutable proof and in-depth, clear and thorough investigation. Such action should not be aimed at entire peoples.

Foreign occupation is indeed one of the most appalling forms of terrorism. Therefore, resistance to such occupation, including Israeli occupation, is legitimate — all the more so since in that occupation an attempt is being made to take advantage of the present situation and the present state of grief to crush the will of the Palestinian people to liberate themselves. The continuation of the occupation requires the international community to act immediately to put an end to it. This must be done in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and international resolutions, and in compliance with the noble and moral religious values and principles that forbid the murder of civilians and innocent people in conformity with the principles of international law, which is based on the principle of cooperation among peoples for the establishment of just peace.

Syrian actions are based on the universal legacy of the Arab countries, of which we are one. This legacy rejects all forms of violence and terrorism. We advocate respect for the rights of all peoples, and we reaffirm the need not to link terrorism, Islam and Arabs. This would in no way contribute to the elimination of terrorism or to a strengthening of international cooperation aimed at achieving prosperity and progress for all humankind. Our joint efforts and our cooperation must aim at dialogue among civilizations in order to draw closer to each other, not a fight among civilizations that would serve no one's interests. Therefore, in order to put an end to terrorism, Syria is calling for genuine intensified international cooperation among civilizations within the framework of the United Nations. These necessary measures must be taken to eliminate the permanent danger of terrorism.

The Syrian Arab Republic has acceded to numerous regional and international conventions concerning the war on terrorism. At present, my country is considering and making efforts to ratify other relevant conventions through our available constitutional and legislative means. We believe that terrorism must be defined and that its root causes must be dealt with. It must not be dealt with as a transient phenomenon; the underlying causes must be dealt with. The international community is called upon to rejuvenate the peace process in the Middle East, a process that has been blocked by Israel because of the continuation of its occupation of the Arab territories, the settlements and its rejection of all relevant Security Council resolutions, aimed at establishing a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East.

In his statement of 24 September 2001, the Secretary-General declared that the United Nations could play a fundamental role in the coordination of international efforts to combat terrorism. Syria would like to state that it supports the effective role that the United Nations could play, particularly as regards the mobilization and coordination of international efforts in this field and in efforts to draw up a definition of terrorism on which everyone could agree.

Mr. Farouk Al-Shara', the Syrian Minister for Foreign Affairs, emphasized that the events of 11 September were not ordinary ones. He expressed hope that that day might become a historic turning point in the history of nations, a turning point towards a better future. During his meeting with a delegation of the European troika in Damascus on 27 September, he added,

> "We have all been shocked; we have all given thought to this. We continue to give thought to this and to what the world will be like today and tomorrow".

He said that Syria, in fact, sympathized with those who had perished and extended its condolences to the families of the victims in the United States. He said,

> "Beyond the ruins, the ashes and the darkness, we can see the light, a light of the salvation of mankind throughout the world".

My delegation will cooperate with the Assembly to see that light and to ensure the success of your task. Indeed, international cooperation is imperative within the United Nations in order to combat terrorism and to define it.

Mr. Da Fonseca (Cape Verde): All the preceding delegations have tried to express from this rostrum their horror and condemnation in describing their feelings about the heinous acts committed against innocent and defenceless people, indeed against all of us, on the morning of 11 September.

Some must have faced the same difficulty as my delegation has in finding adequate words that can translate the revulsion and the pain we all experienced when it was clear that the tragedy resulted from carefully planned and coordinated actions aimed at coldly suppressing thousands of lives, allegedly to make a point.

Suddenly we discovered with horror that warped minds are able to plan and execute what we all thought unthinkable. It showed us how low some people can go or may be led to go in moral depravation.

After 11 September 2001 all of mankind has become endangered. All over the world everyone is now frightened of what may come next. For those of us who witnessed with disbelief the unfolding events, we know now that even worse tragedies may happen if we do not put a definite stop to terrorism. It is our duty to work so that they will never happen again.

The terrorist attacks on New York, Washington and Pennsylvania were evil acts indeed, criminal actions intended to carry an intimidating statement, but acts that proved self-defeating. They received clear and universal condemnation from every corner of the

world. No one has tried to justify what was done, let alone praise it. No one has even claimed to be responsible for organizing or planning, or even inspiring, the attacks. No organization has had the courage to admit that it did it.

This is a clear defeat for the perpetrators, and it is a sign of hope that the whole world has sent a spontaneous, united and strong message to those criminals that terrorism will not be tolerated.

The head of State and the Prime Minister of Cape Verde have expressed their deep condolences to the American Government and people and their heartfelt sympathy to the victims and their families. At the same time, they have condemned in the strongest terms the perpetration of these heinous crimes. Similar feelings were expressed by the leaders of all political parties. In many parts of the country ordinary citizens gathered or organized demonstrations to manifest their grief and denounce those barbaric acts. Two days of national mourning were declared.

In view of the events, the Cape Verdean authorities implemented immediate measures intended to raise the level of security, specifically in and around international airports. Numbers of police personnel were increased, and a new special detachment will be created to deal with airport security. Furthermore, the Government has declared its readiness to cooperate with the international efforts aimed at combating terrorism.

The Government is also studying closely resolution 1373 (2001) and is preparing to take the steps to implement it. We are party to some international conventions and protocols to combat terrorism and expect to sign the remainder in the near future and work for their early ratification.

There can be no doubt that the authors of and accomplices to these crimes must be brought to justice, and all States should cooperate to this end. However, caution should be used to ensure that no more innocent people are added to the already too-long list of victims of those crimes and that nothing serves as a further excuse for committing new acts of terror.

Many delegations have indicated that, besides prosecuting and punishing the perpetrators of terrorist acts, it is necessary to deprive them of their breeding grounds. A successful campaign to eradicate terrorism has to address the long-term challenges that were so eloquently enumerated in the Millennium Declaration. As long as political, economic and social injustice are allowed to prevail there will always be people trying to exploit them for their narrow political agendas or criminal purposes. As long as the international community lacks the capacity to put an end to conflicts and address their real causes, there will be no shortage of recruits for all sorts of desperate acts.

While adopting the necessary measures to eliminate the threat posed by the activities of terrorist groups, as well as their masterminds and supporters, it is important to ensure that the already scarce resources intended to promote the economic and social development of developing countries are not diverted. Instead, a stronger commitment should be made by the developed countries, particularly in the least developed countries, to help put an end to poverty, deprivation and marginalization.

This commitment should start now, by helping developing countries face the additional burden brought by their own effort to participate in the international campaign against international terrorism. By redirecting a share of already scarce resources to increase the level of security, their capacity for addressing the huge challenges of providing for the basic needs of their impoverished populations is reduced.

The scope of the terrorist attacks heightens the need for close cooperation among all States to eradicate this scourge of our times. The United Nations should play a decisive role in this cooperation by adopting effective measures and reinforcing the legal framework aimed at combating terrorism.

My delegation supports the calls made by previous speakers urging the early adoption of a comprehensive convention on terrorism. We are aware of some difficulties, notably the definition of what terrorism is. But the urgency brought on by the events of 11 September should direct us to find the necessary compromises that would enable the draft to be finished. As the Secretary General has stated, there is also a need for moral clarity, and,

> "There can be no acceptance of those who would seek to justify the deliberate taking of innocent civilian life, regardless of cause or grievance." (*A/56/PV.12*)

On the other hand, it is the opinion of my delegation that the Non-aligned Movement's proposal to convene under the auspices of the United Nations a high-level conference to unite the international efforts and adopt a coordinated response to suppress and eliminate terrorism is worthy of consideration by this Assembly. After 11 September 2001, no initiative aimed at formulating a joint approach and a common response to face the terrorist threats should be overlooked.

We are presented with an unprecedented opportunity to show unity and resolve in tackling one of the most pressing challenges ever faced by our family of nations. The United Nations has a unique opportunity to assert its leadership and make a significant step forward in the direction of the objectives set out in its Charter.

Mr. Kerim (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia): Pleading for concerted action against international terrorism and for States' urgent accession to all relevant international conventions, the Millennium Summit of world leaders anticipated the need for a more effective and comprehensive approach with regard to joint efforts and overall cooperation within the United Nations system.

The proceedings of this General Assembly debate on agenda item 166 and the swift response by the United Nations in the aftermath of 11 September — the adoption of General Assembly resolution 56/1 and Security Council resolutions 1368 (2001) and 1373 (2001) — are a very convincing demonstration of the new spirit of cooperation in the United Nations, placing this anti-terrorism issue at the forefront of the Organization's agenda. This spirit is marked not only by the Security Council's strong support for the United Nations initiative of rapid and unanimous action, but also by the commitments of various Governments and States around the globe to join the anti-terrorist coalition.

Aligning itself with the ranks of this coalition, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, at a meeting on 25 September, strongly condemned the terrorist attacks that took place on American soil, and decided to join the global coalition against terrorism. As far as the Macedonian contribution to the joint action in combating terrorism is concerned, my Government decided to prepare draft legislation on combating terrorism and to amend already existing legislation in this area, in order to comply with relevant regional and international conventions and other decisions of the United Nations, thus acting in compliance with the provisions of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001).

For its part, the Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia, in a declaration adopted on 11 September, expressed its strongest condemnation of the terrorist acts and conveyed its deepest condolences and sympathy to the families of the victims, citizens of the United States of America and other countries. Condemning international terrorism as the worst human evil of our time, the consequences of which were also deeply and tragically felt in the Republic of Macedonia, the Parliament expressed the readiness of the Republic of Macedonia to cooperate with and participate in the international activities against terrorism, including through its initiative to establish a regional anti-terrorist pact.

The tragic and outrageous events of 11 September on American soil left thousands of human victims and millions of tons of debris and rubble in their wake. A clear message reverberated through all of us: fighting terrorism on a global front is a clear-cut imperative of our time.

However, plunging into worldwide battle against terrorism means that we must at the same time recognize that — as Secretary-General Kofi Annan has rightfully underlined — no religion, people or region should be targeted because of the unspeakable acts of individuals.

From the point of view of the United Nations, the most important question now is how to deal with this global threat while strengthening the capacity within the Organization to carry out efforts aimed at international peace and security.

With regard to international terrorism, the existing body of United Nations conventions already provides for a solid international legal framework to implement many of the steps that must be taken to eradicate terrorism, including the extradition and prosecution of offenders and the suppression of money-laundering. Fully implementing those conventions will, however, require changes in national legal codes, such as those dealing with border controls and asylum policy.

In our view, the action to be taken should be two-fold. On one hand, all States that have not yet done so should be urged to accede and/or to speed up the process of ratification of existing United Nations conventions. On the other hand, the Sixth Committee will have the onerous task this year of intensifying its work and efforts and of building consensus for the draft conventions pertaining to international terrorism that are under consideration. That includes building consensus for a comprehensive convention on international terrorism and concluding negotiations on the draft convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism. The assistance and guidance of the United Nations Legal Counsel will be more than welcome in this process. We also value the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism, which is contained in the annex to resolution 49/60, of 1994, as a good starting point upon which to build to that end.

The Republic of Macedonia strongly supports the unanimous adoption of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) under Chapter VII of the Charter, and the setting up of a Security Council Committee to monitor implementation of the resolution by Member States. We believe that the bitter experience gained by South-Eastern Europe in recent years from the conflicts in the region — including the ongoing crisis in the Republic of Macedonia — should be taken into account while implementing resolution 1373 (2001). That experience clearly proved the inter-linkages that exist between terrorism, the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, organized crime, drug trafficking and money-laundering.

The Republic of Macedonia is party to all relevant United Nations conventions pertaining to terrorism. My country recently signed the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. The process of ratifying those conventions is under way.

All nations are rightfully preoccupied with issues related to the aftermath of 11 September; but we must also remember the need to address the conditions that gave rise to the growth of such hatred and depravity. In other words, the United Nations must continue its work and concentrate its efforts towards fulfilling the obligations and commitments contained in the Millennium Declaration. That is exactly why the postponed general debate of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly is now of paramount importance.

The conclusions to be drawn from the recent terrorist attacks on the United States must be clear. Globalization and interdependence are bringing enormous benefits to all of us, but they are also creating new strategic risks. Those risks include the vulnerability of globally integrated information and communication structures, the diffusion of potentially dangerous technologies, the combination of fundamentalism and political irresponsibility and access to weapons of mass destruction. These are global challenges and can therefore only be managed jointly, particularly in regard to fighting international terrorism. No State can guarantee security, peace and stability by itself. Cooperation and dialogue with partners must become a guiding principle of international security policy.

As the President of the Republic of Macedonia, Mr. Boris Trajkovski, pointed out in his statement of 14 September,

> "terrorism strikes the large and the small, the great and the humble ... and it is only by addressing the roots of terrorism that we can begin to eliminate it".

As a country with an association and stabilization agreement with the European Union, Macedonia fully shares the views expressed by the representative of the presidency of the European Union, the Permanent Representative of Belgium. We agree in particular with the statement that

> " ... strengthening international cooperation must go hand in hand with strengthening regional cooperation. It calls for strengthened regional cooperation in the fight against international terrorism, as a matter of urgency." (*A/56/PV.12*)

In that regard we welcome the adoption by the European Council of a common definition of terrorism, and we call for a similar approach within the United Nations system.

In concluding my statement, allow me to second the proposal made by the representative of Ukraine to declare 11 September the international day of the struggle against terrorism.

Mr. Schori (Sweden): Three weeks ago, within the span of a few hours we witnessed an unspeakable

tragedy and a most abominable terrorist attack. Our host country and its people, and the international community with them, were shocked and stunned by the viciousness of those acts, targeting as they did innocent civilians and extinguishing thousands of lives. I want today to convey Sweden's condolences and deep sympathy to the families and friends of the victims. I also want to express our sincere respect and admiration for the individual acts of bravery during and after the terrorist attack, and for the way in which New York and its people are recovering from this tragedy.

In addition to causing insufferable pain and damage on American soil and affecting citizens of nations worldwide, the attack of 11 September struck at core values endorsed by the international community and embodied by this Organization: democracy and tolerance, openness and cooperation. Our response in defence of these values must thus be unified and relentless. In his statement on 1 October, the Secretary-General noted that these vicious assaults had had the effect of reaffirming our common humanity. He also identified the task ahead: to develop a broad, comprehensive and, above all, sustained strategy to combat terrorism and eradicate it from our world. Sweden fully endorses the Secretary-General's call, and looks forward to working with all Member States of the United Nations to accomplish that task.

It is only through determined and united action that the international community can come to grips with the evil forces of terrorism. Terrorists aim at creating fear and uncertainty, and at provoking Governments and other decision-makers. Our response must be determined, carefully considered and well calibrated. We should answer with resolve and unity, and ensure that similar events are never repeated.

The quick and unequivocal response of the General Assembly and the Security Council on 12 September, as well as the unanimous adoption of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), last Friday, clearly illustrate the vitality and relevance of the Organization in the fight against terrorism. In resolution 1368 (2001), the Security Council described the acts of 11 September as a threat to international peace and security, and reaffirmed the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence in accordance with the Charter. My Government recognizes that right to take measures of self-defence to prevent a similar atrocity, and notes that any response would have to seek to avoid civilian casualties. As stated by the Security Council, our common objective lies in bringing to justice the perpetrators, organizers and sponsors of these attacks, and in redoubling our efforts to prevent and suppress terrorist acts, including by increased cooperation.

Through its resolution 1373 (2001), the Security Council provided all Member States with a solid foundation for the struggle against terrorism. Sweden welcomes the resolve of the Security Council, affirming the central role of the United Nations in this endeavour. Resolution 1373 (2001) identifies a range of important measures to prevent and combat terrorism, including, among other things, stopping the flow of finance and funds for terrorist activities, improving information exchange, eliminating the supply of weapons to terrorists, bringing persons involved in terrorist acts to justice, preventing the movement of terrorists and denying them safe haven.

In his statement of 1 October, the Secretary-General observed that the implementation of resolution 1373 (2001) will require technical expertise at the national level, and he encouraged States to offer assistance in that regard. Sweden has taken note of his call, and will look into the possibility of providing such support as a means of strengthening the global struggle against terrorism.

The acts of 11 September — the worst mass killings of innocents in the sad history of terrorism — constitute not only a large-scale terrorist attack. My Government considers that those terrorist acts constitute a crime against humanity, and that States should bring the perpetrators to justice and punish them. In that regard, I want to stress the importance of the establishment of the International Criminal Court. The Rome Statute opens a new chapter in international law that will certainly affect the conduct of States but, more important, will guide and shape the behaviour of individuals.

I also want to stress the vital importance of the legal framework provided by the 12 conventions on international terrorism adopted under United Nations auspices, and their protocols. Those instruments should be signed, ratified and implemented worldwide without delay. The Swedish Government has recently ratified the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings, and will within days sign the International Convention for the Suppression of the

Financing of Terrorism and will ratify it as soon as the legal preparatory work is completed.

Efforts should also be redoubled to finalize negotiations on a comprehensive convention on international terrorism, as proposed by India, and to make progress in the deliberations on a convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism, as proposed by the Russian Federation.

The tragedy of 11 September has highlighted the need for intensified efforts to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery vehicles. Sweden agrees with the statement by the Secretary-General a fortnight ago that progress in the area of nuclear non-proliferation is now more important than ever. Biological, chemical and nuclear weapons must not fall into the hands of terrorists. The international community must shoulder its responsibility and find ways to strengthen and ensure compliance with the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, ensure the effective implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction and reinforce the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

Greater efforts must also be made to prevent the uncontrolled spread of small arms and light weapons. In addition to fuelling armed conflicts, such weapons have been used in numerous terrorist acts. The Programme of Action adopted in July at the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects spells out a number of measures aimed at combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. The events of 11 September have underlined the need for forceful follow-up to the Conference.

Let me end with this comment. There is a need to better address the underlying social, economic and political problems that create the human misery in which fanaticism and terrorism can grow and find support. Conflict prevention and resolution, as well as development cooperation and humanitarian assistance, trade and investment and increased efforts for cross-cultural understanding are indispensable instruments in a comprehensive long-term policy. In the coming year, two important meetings will take place at the highest political level: the International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held in Mexico, and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held at Johannesburg. Let the events of recent weeks strengthen our resolve to reach substantial and concrete outcomes at those meetings, for the benefit of development worldwide.

Mr. Sharma (India): On Monday, a few hours before the General Assembly began its debate on terrorism here, in India a suicide bomber drove his car, packed with explosives, into the compound of the Legislative Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir, while two accomplices sprayed bullets at anyone in sight. Forty people are dead so far, among them schoolchildren and women, and many more are injured. A terrorist organization called Jaish-e-Mohammed has jubilantly claimed responsibility, naming the man who drove the car.

Jaish-e-Mohammed was set up by Masood Azhar, a foreign terrorist who was caught in India, tried and sentenced. Two years ago, an Indian Airlines plane was hijacked to Kandahar in Afghanistan by terrorists who demanded his release and that of a few other terrorists also in Indian jails. Using tactics that the world will now find familiar, they slit the throats of passengers and threatened to kill the others. Very reluctantly, to save innocent lives, we handed over the convicted terrorists to the Taliban in Kandahar; the hijackers and their prizes then disappeared into Taliban-held territory, from where they have since reappeared to kill, terrorize and incite to terrorism.

The terrible events of 11 September brought home to a world that probably did not realize this until then how much of an international phenomenon terrorism truly is: international in its organization and international in its effects. We should remember that as we take up the agenda item entitled "Measures to eliminate international terrorism". We understand from reports in the Western media that at least one of the terrorists we were forced to free in Kandahar is under suspicion for the attacks on the World Trade Center. The prime suspect, Osama bin Laden, based in Afghanistan, recruited his terrorists from West Asia and North Africa, sent some of them to Europe to plan and prepare, and carried out an act of monumental cruelty in North America. While the target was the United States — and its citizens bore the brunt — individuals from all parts of the world were among the victims: 250 Indian citizens are still missing. Over the past decade, terrorists have killed tens of thousands in

almost daily attacks in India, but very few incidents have taken as heavy a toll of Indian lives as this did.

The fact that terrorism is an international problem and can only be tackled collectively is something that countries that have suffered most from it know in their bones and that they have urged upon the rest of the world. The welcome transformation that has come about since 11 September is the sudden emergence of an international solidarity to meet an international threat. The United States, far and away the most powerful State in the international community, nevertheless believes that it needs and must have the assistance of a coalition of States in order to successfully mount an offensive against the terrorists who attacked it.

If the United States needs this, how much more do others, infinitely more weak and vulnerable, need the same solidarity? Without it, countries that have been preyed upon by a global network of terrorism simply cannot cope with the challenge alone.

We therefore hope that the solidarity which has been manifest over the last two weeks will continue and that it will not be confined to a hunt for an individual or a group, or to dealing with the symptoms alone; we must destroy terrorism as a system. Terrorism is an organic whole; it would be dangerous to try to cut one of the cells out, and to then tell ourselves that we had killed it off. It is an evil that metastasizes. Terrorism must be destroyed root and branch. It is the anathema of the new century.

We know that there can be a concern that a war against terrorism might turn into a witch-hunt. Some argue that a distinction must be drawn between freedom fighters and terrorists. To this, we would say, as the Secretary-General reminded us on Monday, that the laws of civilized behaviour should apply to all. Normatively, international humanitarian law does not permit methods or means that can only be described as terrorism in the pursuit of any cause.

The great leap forward in international law over the last few years has been the emergence of the norm that there can be no impunity for crimes that constitute a grave violation of human rights. When political office, and bureaucratic or diplomatic immunity, have not protected some who have committed grave violations and have now been brought to justice, it cannot be admissible to argue that freedom fighters or any other group would be the only individuals who would be above the law. Terrorism is defined by the act, not by a description of the perpetrator.

Secondly, while the cynical view might be that the end justifies the means, in all worthwhile political enterprises, the means are as important as the ends. Eighty years ago, as India's freedom struggle was moving into a decisive phase, police fired on a group of protesters in the village of Chauri Chaura. The demonstrators ran amok and burnt down the police station, with 22 policemen in it. Mahatma Gandhi declared that the freedom movement had disgraced itself, and suspended it.

What sort of freedom would it be that may be claimed by massacring 6,000 innocent people on 11 September? The same day, thousands of miles away in India, terrorists walked into a temple, seized the two priests and beheaded them before the congregation. Those terrorists came from the same stable as those who slit the throats of passengers on 11 September, who killed Indian passengers in the same brutal fashion two years ago, and who attacked the Legislative Assembly in Jammu and Kashmir on Monday. They were trained in the same camps and were financed and backed by the same people. In facing them, as many have reminded us, there can be no moral relativism. The Secretary-General emphasized the imperative of moral clarity. One can either be for civilization or for terrorism; there is no middle ground.

We hope that the shock of what happened on 11 September will force many Governments to rethink positions to which they have been wedded for far too long. Some of them, which are liberal, open societies, but which have not so far been the target of terrorists, have argued that only States violate human rights; terrorism, they think, is only a crime, and they have been reluctant to join in either a condemnation of, or action against, terrorism as a violation of human rights.

Speaking to the Commission on Human Rights on 25 September, the High Commissioner for Human Rights reminded its members that the victims of the attacks of 11 September have lost the foremost right, the right to life. We could not agree more. Terrorists violate human rights in the most egregious ways, and, as the High Commissioner told the Commission, the acts of terrorism that took place on 11 September should be considered a crime against humanity.

But there is an even more insidious way in which terrorists undermine human rights. As the events of 11

September showed, terrorists are driven not so much by blind rage as by a clear-eyed hatred of the values that open, liberal, secular societies represent. There is an inevitable progression in plural, democratic societies to ever-greater freedoms for their citizens, balanced by civic responsibilities freely undertaken. The citizens of the freest societies in the world enjoy freedoms now that their parents did not have.

It is this progress towards ever-greater freedom that represents the greatest threat to those who believe in violent, repressive creeds. Multi-ethnic, multireligious, open and tolerant societies are naturally odious to them; it is these values that they want to destroy most of all, even more than symbols like the World Trade Center, or a Legislative Assembly. For them, terrorism is a double-barrelled weapon. After the devastation it wreaks, it takes an even greater and more insidious toll. Open, democratic societies, by their very nature both the targets of and vulnerable to terrorism, must necessarily take steps to defend their citizens. Instead of moving towards greater civil liberties, they have to constrict some in the interests of security.

In the most unfortunate situations, the State apparatus, unable to cope with the security challenge posed by terrorism, is forced to take draconian measures to counter it, with an inevitable impact on civic and human rights. The anguished debate over this that we see taking place in the United States is one that many other democracies wracked by terrorism have gone through many times over. Terrorism wants to force a diminution of openness, tolerance, rights and freedom. This is why it is, and must be seen as, a principal threat to human rights.

We hope that the international solidarity forged in the crucible of the recent disaster will be permanent, but it would be prudent to work on the assumption that, as memory fades, so too might the willingness to stay together to fight a common evil. Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), the far-reaching resolution that the Security Council has just adopted, should provide a framework for collective and individual action, laying down a permanent obligation on all Members. We see it as analogous to the special powers that democratic Governments enact to counter terrorism. We hope that it will be followed up and effectively implemented.

The attack on the Legislative Assembly, which took place two days after resolution 1373 (2001) was adopted and is a deliberate challenge to it, will be the first test of the willingness of States to abide by the responsibilities that the Council has now made mandatory and of the resolve of the Council and the international community to back up their words with deeds, because paragraph 2 (d) of resolution 1373 (2001) demands that States

> "prevent those who finance, plan, facilitate or commit terrorist acts from using their respective territories for those purposes against other States or their citizens".

The General Assembly must do at least as much. It does not have the power to compel compliance, but it speaks with the voice and the moral authority of the entire international community. The General Assembly cannot, and perhaps should not, try to match the resolution of the Council, but it can, and we hope it will, decide to throw its whole weight behind measures to develop a framework of international law within which international action can be taken against terrorism.

The capstone on this structure of conventions against terrorism is the comprehensive convention now under negotiation. The question has sometimes been asked as to why, when we already have 12 international conventions against terrorism, we need a comprehensive convention. The answer was given, sadly and monstrously, on 11 September. Planes were hijacked, but the cluster of conventions on hijacking provides for action only against the hijackers; on 11 September, they killed themselves with their victims. Passengers were taken hostage, but the cluster of conventions against hostage-taking also provides for action only against the hostage-takers; on 11 September, they killed themselves with their victims. Planes were used as massive bombs to destroy the World Trade Center and damage the Pentagon, but the conventions on terrorist bombings have precise definitions of what constitutes an explosive; no one thought that a plane would ever be used as an explosive.

Therefore, as experts on international law now realize and our citizens will find hard to believe, under the framework of the existing conventions on terrorism the international community could not take action against those who recruited, trained, ordered, supported, instigated or harboured the terrorists who committed the most horrendous act of terrorism the world has ever seen.

The Working Group of the Sixth Committee goes into session in a fortnight's time. There are a few issues left to resolve. As the Secretary-General reminded us, some of these have been contentious in the past, when we might have permitted ourselves the luxury of theoretical debate. It would be the best memorial to those who died on 11 September and the clearest pledge that we will work to ensure that an atrocity like that never recurs if, at this session, the General Assembly were to come to an agreement by consensus on a comprehensive convention to outlaw international terrorism.

Mr. Wang Yingfan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation was deeply shocked by and strongly condemns the 11 September terrorist attacks in New York, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania. The item on measures to eliminate international terrorism has been deliberated by the General Assembly for quite some years, but this year it has become more special and urgent than ever before.

Terrorism, which endangers innocent lives, depletes social wealth and jeopardizes state security, constitutes a serious challenge to human civilization and dignity and poses a real threat to international peace and security. The international community must therefore pool its wisdom and strengthen international cooperation against terrorism.

The United Nations, which is the principal forum in which States can cooperate with each other in combating terrorism, should play a leading role in the international effort to that end. The main organs and other relevant agencies of the United Nations should step up their coordination and cooperation in preventing and combating international terrorism. The Security Council should play its due role and establish an international anti-terrorism mechanism.

Since the General Assembly's adoption in 1994 of the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism, commendable progress has been made in strengthening measures to combat international terrorism, as represented by the adoption of the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, as well as the ongoing formulation of an international convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism and a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. States should be encouraged to become parties to the existing international anti-terrorism conventions as soon as possible and to implement them faithfully. More positive and constructive efforts should be made to finalize the aforementioned two draft anti-terrorism conventions that are still under negotiation.

States should take the necessary measures, in accordance with their national laws and international obligations, to cut off any financial, material, military and other forms of support for terrorists, resolutely bring the perpetrators of terrorist acts to justice and refrain from supporting or tolerating them for any reason or in any manner. Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) of 28 September 2001 should be faithfully implemented.

The fight against international terrorism, which will be a protracted and complicated task, should be guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and other well-established norms of international law. An integrated approach involving political, diplomatic, economic, legal and other means should be adopted in this regard.

We are strongly opposed to linking terrorism to any specific religion or ethnicity. In order to eliminate international terrorism, efforts must be made to address its symptoms and underlying causes alike. In the international fight against terrorism, the diversity of civilizations should be respected and the issue of development addressed vigorously so as to enable people at all levels in all countries to benefit from globalization. The international community should strengthen its efforts to solve regional conflicts in a more positive manner and seek just and reasonable solutions on the basis of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

The Government of China firmly opposes and condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. It is China's basic policy to prevent and combat all terrorist activities. China is a party to nine out of the 12 international conventions against terrorism and active preparations are under way for it to join the two most recently adopted: the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism.

The Chinese Government has dedicated itself to the promotion of regional and bilateral cooperation against terrorism, and has, within the framework of the

Shanghai Cooperation Organization, concluded, with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, the Shanghai Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism.

The Chinese Government is determined to fight resolutely, together with all other States, against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

Programme and organization of work

The President: I wish to draw the attention of the General Assembly to document A/INF/56/3, which contains a partial programme of work and schedule of plenary meetings and which has been distributed in the Hall. This schedule was prepared to facilitate the organization of the work of delegations and to help ensure that the relevant documentation is ready for the discussion on the respective items.

Members will notice that agenda item 11, "Report of the Security Council", originally announced for Thursday morning, 4 October 2001, has been scheduled for Monday, 15 October 2001 instead. Members will also notice that, as a result of consultations, it was agreed that the general debate be scheduled for a seven-day period, from Saturday, 10 November, through Friday, 16 November 2001, which means that it will include one Sunday, 11 November. Since the Assembly will devote seven days instead of 10 days to the general debate, the morning meetings during the general debate will be from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and the afternoon meetings will be from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Furthermore, since this will result in 48 hours for statements in the general debate, instead of 60 hours, I urge speakers to limit their statements in the general debate to 15 minutes, so that all the speakers can be accommodated within these seven days. I honestly ask for your cooperation in this regard so that we can hold the general debate as scheduled.

I will in due course announce the dates for the consideration of other agenda items, as well as keep the Assembly informed of any additions or changes. This information will also be indicated in addenda to document A/INF/56/3. The lists of speakers for items cited in document A/INF/56/3 are now open.

In addition, I would like to announce the following activities. The 2001 United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities will be held on the morning of Wednesday and Thursday, 7 and 8 November. The announcement of voluntary contributions to the 2001 programmes of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East will take place on Thursday, 4 December, in the morning. Members are requested to consult the Journal for the announcements on these activities for further details.

For more detailed information on the general debate, I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Perfiliev (Director, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council Affairs Division): We would like to inform Member States that the list of speakers for the general debate will be prepared in accordance with provisional list, number 3, that was made available to all members on 29 August 2001. The sequence of speakers on the list will be maintained as much as possible, but the list will be condensed to cope with the new time frame of the debate, which allows 14 meetings instead of previously planned 20 meetings. Now we have 14 meetings instead of 20, and seven days instead of 10 days of debate.

However, those Member States that had indicated previously to the Secretariat that their heads of State and Government would be coming to the general debate should reconfirm the level of their representation for the general debate to the General Assembly and Economic and Social Council Affairs Division by Monday, 8 October 2001, at 5 p.m. Our fax number is 963-4230.

We will also be happy to be informed as soon as possible if other Member States will participate at the head of State or head of Government level, so as to accommodate them in the best way possible. This would enable the Secretariat to prepare a new provisional list of speakers, number 4, for the general debate during that week and make it available to members by the end of next week. This announcement will be distributed in the Hall during this meeting or in the afternoon today.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.